THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

FITZGERALD

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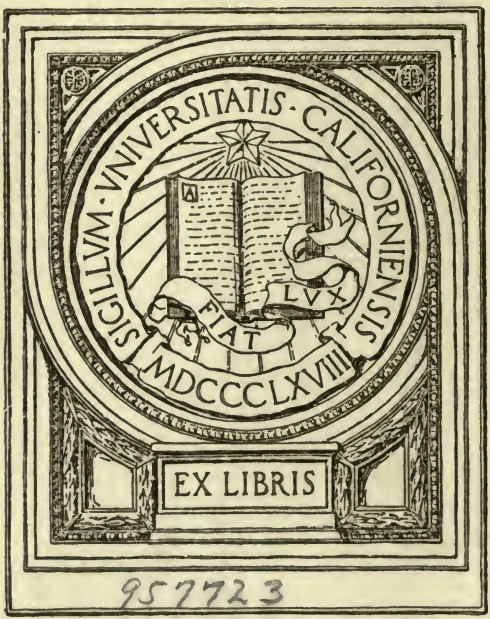

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RUBÁIYÁT
OF
OMAR KHAYYÁM

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

"The great charm of all ancient literatures, one often thinks, is the finding of ourselves in the past. It is as if the fable of repeated and recurring lives were true; as if in the faith, or unbelief, or merriment, or despair, or courage, or cowardice of men long dead, we heard the echoes of our own thoughts, and the beating of hearts that were once our own. This may explain, in part, the popularity to-day of Omar Khayyám, the Poet-Astronomer of Persia. When Duke William was conquering England, when Harold fell, when Hereward the Wake was waging his hopeless fight in the fens of Ely, Omar was writing on algebra, and writing poetry too, at Merv, in Central Asia. Who could have foreseen that Merv would one day become a place of moment to England, or that *we* should be listening to that Persian singer, and finding our dreams and fancies anticipated in his! He lived in the Ages of Faith—of Faith, Christian or Moslem—and, lo, he says after the Greeks all that the Greeks said of saddest; the most resigned reflections of Marcus Aurelius rise to his lips, and he repeats, long before our day, the words of melancholy or of tolerance which now are almost commonplaces. That is why we listen, because the familiar sayings come on the wings of a strange music from a strange place—from the lips of Omar, from the City of the Desert. Yet it is very difficult, even for the learned—even for Oriental scholars—to know exactly what poems are Omar's own and which are mere imitations and copies. The ancient Persian manuscripts of his works contain, some more, some fewer, of his 'Rubáiyát,' the brief stanzas, or quatrains, in which he jotted down a thought. They are but rhymed poetic pensées, or maxims, aiming more at melancholy than at wit. Which are his very own? We must be content with supposing that the best are his.

Andrew Lang.

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تصویر نشستن ایشان در منزل خواجه محمود صحبت کردن ۱۳۱۵

Nizam ul Mulk, Hasan Ben Sabbah and Omar Khayyam
from a Persian water-color sketch.

In their youth these three were pupils of one of the greatest wise men of Khorassan, the Imam Mowaffak of Naishapur. They were all endowed with sharpness of wit and great natural powers, and became close friends. One day Hasan said to his friends, "It is the universal belief that the pupils of Imam will attain to fortune. Now, even if we all do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will. We will make a vow, that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself." In the years that followed Nizam became Vizier to the Sultan Alp Arslan, and in time his old school friends found him out and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the school-day vow. Hasan demanded a place in the government which the Sultan granted at the Vizier's request. Selfish and ungrateful he endeavored to supplant his benefactor and was disgraced and banished. Omar asked for neither title or office, and simply begged to be allowed to live in a corner under the shadow of the Vizier's fortune, where he might spread the advantages of Science and pray for his friend's long life and prosperity. The Vizier impressed by his sincerity granted him a yearly pension, and the old Tent-Maker gave his life to Science and Song.

THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

THE ASTRONOMER POET OF PERSIA

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE BY
EDWARD FITZGERALD

THE TEXT OF THE FOURTH EDITION FOLLOWED BY THAT OF THE FIRST, WITH NOTES SHOWING THE EXTENT OF HIS INDEBTEDNESS TO THE PERSIAN ORIGINAL.

A BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE
FITZGERALD'S SKETCH OF THE LIFE
OF OMAR, AND A FOREWORD BY
TALCOTT WILLIAMS

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"Sultan and Slave alike have gone their way
With Bahrám Gúr, but whither none may say.
Yet he who charmed the wise at Naísháp úr
Seven centuries since, still charms the wise to-day."

—*Thomas Bailey Aldrich.*

OMAR—FORE-WORD AND FORE-PLEA.

By TALCOTT WILLIAMS.

HE Persian alone of Aryan stock has lifted his Iranic forefinger and testified to one God and his Prophet. Fragments of Aryan nations have become Mohammedan, all along the Islamic fringe. Nowhere else a nation. Why the Semitic mind reached monotheism centuries earlier than the Aryan, which is still imperfectly monotheistic in religious theory and practice, in dogma and in worship, it is in our present state of knowledge impossible to explain. We cannot even say certainly whether Aryan and Semitic are convergent or divergent stems of the human root-stock—singular or plural in structure, who shall decide?

We know, for this has gone on in the visible and recorded day of history, that the Aryan races tend in their day of trial and troubles to invent a new God, and the Semitic to return to an old one. Polytheism is the note early and late of Europe, until it learned monotheism from a Semitic prophet whom a squad of Aryan soldiers—probably Teuton, which is to say of the Aryan future and advance—crucified. By nature, the Semite is a monotheist. His religious impulses

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here begin and here end, often with much wandering between, but also with much certainty. Of the two world religions he has given humanity, his latter product, Mohammedanism, was rejected by every Aryan nation other than the Persian, though on a short-lived October day at Tours in mid-France it once seemed as if all the European Arya would adopt Islam. It did not, and the history of literature furnishes but one school of national letters in which the particolored Aryan imagination and inspiration has had to adjust its rosy dream to the iron bed of Semitic monism.

Omar is the most significant product of this conflict and collision between the bent of a race and the bending of a creed. Islam is the last word of the Semitic tendency. For the pure Semitic races, it is a final faith. There is a sense in which it is more Hebraic than the Hebrew conception of religion, and its solitary lapses are due to the rabbinical properties which Mohammed found flotsam on the beach where the Jewish race had shipwrecked, and made of them the grotesque salvage of his tent. Remove these and you have the best of Israel, minus the Messiah, robed in an Arab austerity. Fate and the Arab lances at the Battle of the Bridges drove this creed down the laughter-loving throat of the Persian. He lives in the Orient. He is not, any more than is the Japanese, in the proper sense of the word, an Oriental. Any one of us with Asiatic acquaintance, early learns that he can reach a contact with Persians, can enjoy intimate relations and a personal sympathy

as he cannot with other Mohammedans or their more distant neighbors. The European diplomatic representatives at Teheran come away with friendships such as they gain nowhere else from Fez to Pekin. Race is more than faith. The Aryan Mohammedan is still Aryan rather than Mohammedan, close as is the grip of that vice-like creed which is alone among faiths in presenting no race which having adopted has abandoned. Shut in by Moslem lands, the open and arid gate through which the Central Asiatic horde has poured for loot on the twin river valleys, the Euphrates and the Nile, and the Levant beyond, as rich—the Persian is perforce Mohammedan, but he has worn his rue—bitter he has found it—with a difference, and invented his own special heresy. He has devised his incarnation in Ali. He has linked the Prophet in an eternal and original relation with the divine. Wine is his, and so it is pictured art, and he has devised an ingenious contract-marriage —which combines in convenient proportion the hetairic license of the West and the rigid legal formalism in matters of sex of the East, where the field may indeed be wider, but the fence higher and more impassable than in Western society. The Mohammedan, we always remember, has gained much in legal license. We always forget how much he has foresworn in individual initiative. He has his preserve. He does not poach. The few men I have known who have tried both plans, prefer the Mohammedan. A restricted polygamy was to them more seemly than monogamy modified by

prostitution. The Persian, being both Aryan and Mohammedan, has combined both plans, and enjoys the unenviable deep of ignominy that both the East and the West unite in his sexual detestation.

The young Persian of aspiration and ability who finds himself environed by these antinomies of race and religion, driven one way by his creed and another by his character, takes refuge in becoming Sufi. Watered by his desires rather than his convictions, the dry branch of Semitic monotheism puts forth the white flower of mysticism, and sets in that strange fruitage which is perpetually reminding us that under all skies and for both sexes religious fervor and sexual passion may be legal tender for the same emotions, the twin halves of the same coin which bears, as some ancient pieces do, on one side the altars of the God and on the other the symbol of lust. By creed, the young Persian must believe in one God. As Sufi he sees in one God a monism which makes all the universe the manifestation of the divine unity. Into the chilly cup of the formal observance of the Koran he pours the wine of life, and drinks to all creeds alike, treating all conduct as the consecration and completion of self in the diviner enthusiasm of nature. He may withdraw himself from the outer world and ponder alone on the ineffable unity of God to which after long travail and travel, if he faint not in this desert of self with its mirages of sense, a man may in due season lose himself by finding God, or, since God is in all his works, and nowhere more than in the in-

scrutable inspiration of sex and the amazing intoxication of the vine, he may equally lose himself in these adorable works of the divine, sign, symbol and expression of those deeper processes of the spirit by which the image of God is implanted in the receptive and womblike soul and man is lost in a deep and divine intoxication where the senses reel and only the inner nature lives, conscious or unconscious. If human nature were divided and differenced into the exclusive logical categories of a code of ethics, and had no ill habit of self-deception or dangerous possibility of auto-temptation, our young Persian would be one kind of Sufi or the other. He would run with the hare of aspiration or hunt with the hounds of sensual desire. Instead, he generally does both. Often, beginning with restraint in youth, and as years come and the experience of life tells age what youth missed, he redresses the absent follies of youth by the more abundant folly of age. The flitting forties as they fade into the fifties are fruitful in all lands of such fate. Oscillating easily, early or later or both, between spirit and sense, the Persian swings like a pendulum from sensual desire to spiritual ecstasy, and the dial face of his literature records both beats impartially. Of most, perhaps all, Persian Sufi verse it is impossible to say authoritatively in which mood it was conceived or whether a carnal or spiritual conjugation guided the paradigm of *amo*.

Many dull men and some men of genious have written verse under this dual inspiration. Little of it

interests, save in its original Persian. These lower jungles of native and overgrown verse, when a path has been cleared through them by translation, seem dull in all tongues but their own. The peaks alone are always visible in all latitudes, catch the same sunlight and bear the same flora. They are few. It would be idle criticism to urge the astronomer-poet of Persia as one of them. His Western vogue—not all the work of his translator—he owes to causes broader and more general than the accident of a happy version like Fitzgerald's. He wrote at a moment fortunate for his style, his language and his wide acceptance. The great experiment of the Caliphate had failed. It had given the Moslem world neither authority in Religion nor security in the State. A century before Omar's birth, Mustakfi had lost the last remnant of civil power enjoyed by his predecessors. The Pope rose from priest to sovereign. The Caliph sank from sovereign to priest. The short-lived peace of the Abbassids which had stretched from the Atlantic to the Indus ended in whelming rack, as complete and as terrible to human happiness as the more tragic and more visible fate of the Roman rule.

The first ferment and fission which split the crumbling arch of empire and broke it into wrangling and waning kingdoms had been succeeded at Omar's birth and boyhood by that secondary irruption of the savage which in all dying states means massacre and irretrievable ruin. The Berber of the South Atlas under Yusuf Ben Tashfin was riding and ravaging from the Wad Sus

to Guadalquivir. Under Arab rulers, the Touareg horse of the Fatimids was spoiling the long coast of the Mediterranean from the site of Carthage to the site of Tyre, and ending for centuries a commerce which had begun with the dawn of history. Over his own land, successive tides of invasion had swept as the Northern steppe hived its hideous swarms and left desolute through all the years that have passed the city-sprinkled plains from the Oxus to the Ægean. East of him, the Pathan mountaineers had begun under Mahmud of Ghazni that descent on either fertile plain which has ended so often in the sack of Delhi or the ravage of Khurasan. Out of all the welter the strong hand of the Seljuk was forming the outlines of the vigorous rule which later on transformed itself into the wasting dominion of the Turk. Through all the lands that Omar knew, no city was safe, no man dwelt secure and no delicate woman slept unaware of the hideous slavery into which she might be swept on the morrow, tending some Tartar campfire as a little later women of half the princely stocks of Asia drudged in the hordes of Chingiz or slaved in the tents of Timur. The wail of Augustine and the plaint of Boethius we know under like conditions, and after half a millennium of long rapine and ravage as we pass the cloisters of Cluny, when all the Roman world was long since waste and its brief successor in the West had left only failure, there sounds the wide lament, "Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt, vigilemus" as men painfully adapt

themselves to new ideals of the State and seek celestial consolation.

A century earlier, the Moslem world of Khurasan was facing like failure in the Eastern successor of stable Rome, and, sunk in the infinite and irremediable misery of the hot ashes of successive savage eruptions, was adjusting its theories of the past, its sufferings in the present and its hopes of the future to the shattered fragments of brutal rule which brought despotic and precarious protection. Some men, like the school-fellow of Omar, Hasan, fled in a despair akin to insanity to desolate mountain valleys, once peopled, and tempered despotism with a remedy so strange and new to the world that men in all tongues East and West could but give it the name of its inventor. Like another school-mate to whom the poet owed his honorable support, others sought service with whatever strong-armed ruler had the wit and will to commute plunder into taxation, a process sometimes reversed in our own day and land. Men such as Omar, could but seek, as Plato once advised, some convenient door-way during the pitiless rain and watch like a spectator the misery of passing humanity in the world's open street swept by the storm of war.

His language was ready to his hand. Firdausi had given it epic dignity, conscious expression and metric form. Persian stood in Omar's day, if one may compare great things with less, where Simonides found his tongue when he turned to epigram and raised the Greek

analogue of the Persian quatrain to its highest and most austere level of unapproachable perfection. If Persia had had its first great epic poet, the descent and decline of its poetry had not yet begun. It was not as yet smothered under its own riches, its muse overwhelmed by a Tarpeian gift of metaphor, betraying the virgin citadel of style to win the treacherous prize of popular praise. The tent-maker's son found it an instrument still simple, strong and dignified, and he brought to the repressed expression of his day a nature more akin to the West than to the East. Of the events of his life, we know little. Of the character and cast of his mind, we know much. Fortune gave him the happy fate that while the day of his birth is forgotten, the birth of his works is remembered. He combined the imagination of the mathematician and the patience of the computer. The specious axioms of Euclid could not deceive him and he anticipated the challenge of six succeeding centuries by perceiving the limitations and assumptions in the definitions of the great Alexandrian. The dominical labor of astronomical tables did not daunt him. His adjustment of the calendar was more accurate than that of Clavius after four hundred years of added knowledge. The Tarikh a Jallili opens the way to less error than the correction of Gregory in the calendar of Cæsar, an accuracy which the Persian observer shares with the Maya star-gazers of Yucatan. This singular endowment of original imagination, of freedom from the trammels of authority and stern

resolution to submit to the slavery of slow toil, suffuses his quatrains. He spoke because he had thought, had achieved and had endured. This gave substance to his verse, dignity to his style and character to his utterance.

The precise form in which he expressed his protest at a creed alien to his race and native to his birth, baffles translation, as all such expression must. The simplicity of his verse reflects the simplicity of his life. Thought is simple. Its expression becomes complex as life grows complicated. In this, letters and man move together. With what an apparatus do we envelope our days, and what a lengthening coil of conveniences do we drag through the gathering years! There probably never was a time when all Omar's bed, bedding and wardrobe, the books of his studies and the tools of his trade, cross-staff and perchance some early predecessors of the astrolabe, were not easily packed away in a single one of the small closets in the thick walls of a Persian home. A single mule load, and himself above, was all he needed and asked for travel. A porter with his knot could always have moved all the possessions of the observer and poet. His pleasuring was in the open court, where water rippled into the square pool as he sat on one side, with no furniture for his dinner but a rug to sit upon and a dish to eat from, and on the other brink, before him, the lute-player twanged, and the cypress-waisted girl, her breasts rounded beneath the thin silk of Mosul, bent and turned and swayed, her

bare feet pressing the patterned and particolored prayer-rug on which, as the muzzein sounded, Omar was bent in prayer in the words of the Rikat and the spirit of universal worship. Afield, we yearn for all that a house can hold, and the commissariat of a picnic taxes and tests the manifold organization of a modern market and draws for its prepared foods on the last triumph of science and the last adaptation of glass and metal to the preservation of the fruits of every clime. But Omar—wiser or less wise, who shall say?—walked abroad to the gardens about Naishápúr, whose streaming irrigation differenced them from the parched and barren wastes beyond, and so there was an open arch out of whose cool and inner recess a fountain welled, with maiden's-hair thick about and shade over the cut-stone runlet in which grapes lay cooling and the wine-jar was set, and in the pouched waist of his zeboon a brown loaf or two—"'t were Paradise enow"—when some girl stood in the moving shade of the spreading walnut-tree, her arms swaying and the undulations of passion passing over all her form as the sea swells in calm nights when storms have been and are to be.

If life be as simple as its passions, and the astronomer himself have naught between his eye and the stars but the clear air, and between man and maid there be naught but desire, the expression of the poet will center to the antinomy of his race and age, and the boundaries of being will limit his vision. None else will he see, and for none else do men at the last yearn.

Christianity, like an indefinite decimal, whose ultimate end and analysis lie in the infinite, is always approximating to monotheism without ever quite reaching it. When men do, they are near Omar, for this sensitive Aryan poet—sensitive, Aryan, and a poet—which is to express, had passed through the furnace of a monistic faith and had come out annealed and an agnostic. The rapid succession of Islam, like some short-lived plant which blooms and blasts in thin soil, had run its cycle more swiftly than its opposing faith. In a century its creed was fixed. In two it had its revival of Greek learning. In three or four, its science had sphered its full round of discovery. Its day was done. There remained but the sterile sword of Seljuk and Turk. As it was first unsheathed, Omar came. The microcosm of Islam held in small all that was to unfold at large in the macrocosm of Christianity. He knew how little a creed could do when knowledge had outrun faith. He saw how strong grow the claims of sense when science is the sole stay of conduct, for the visible facts of life are of the flesh. The nice subtlety of theological explanation he had weighed and found wanting. He had learned how barren are mere morals. He had felt how full is the universe to the soul, and how empty to the thinker or the theologian. These all were as plain at Naishápúr in the eleventh century as in the new world in the nineteenth. The tide of every faith, as it ebbs, leaves exposed the same barren sands of doubt, and on them, whether Marcus write in Rome,

or Omar in Naisháṕur, the same sentence appears, and we read the same meaning. Not every breeze has its harp, and not every beach its poet. Many faiths ebb, and have neither Marcus nor Omar. But what Omar wrote, many wrote. So universal is his message that of his quatrains scores are dubious, and no man can separate true from false, or establish a canon of authorship, He wrote what all men feel. All men feel what he wrote. The Oriental, wise above what is written, cares much for the message and little for the messenger. Since it be worth reading, of what moment is it who wrote? For us, there must needs be the more complex meaning and music of his translator; but the original center of attraction, the final cause of sympathy, which has suddenly made Omar's name a household word in every Western home of the Muses, lies deeper than verse or meaning, utterance or desire. Brothers by race and alien by creed, here too is another, who has known, as we have known, the shock and contrast between the Semitic sense for morals and the Aryan sense for beauty, and so feeling is of one kindred, though seas divide and tongues separate.

TO E. FITZGERALD.

Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree.
And while your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand and knee,
Or on your head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet
Let down to Peter at his prayers;
Who live on milk and meal and grass:
And once for ten long weeks I tried
Your table of Pythagoras,
And seem'd at first "a thing enskied"
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light
To float above the ways of men,
Then fell from half-spiritual height
Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again
One night when earth was winter-black,
And all the heavens flash'd in frost;
And on me, half-asleep, came back
That wholesome heat the blood had lost,
And set me climbing icy capes
And glaciers, over which there roll'd
To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes

Of Eshcol hugeness; for the cold
Without, and warmth within me, wrought
To mould the dream; but none can say
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought,
Who reads your golden Eastern lay,
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel
Your Omar; and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two,
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,
Two voices heard on earth no more;
But we old friends are still alive,
And I am nearing seventy-four,
While you have touch'd at seventy-five,
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting; and my son who dipt
In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this, which you will take,
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know,
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times,
When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes,
And I more pleasure in your praise.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

EDWARD FITZGERALD, whom the world has already learned, in spite of his own efforts to remain within the shadow of anonymity, to look upon as one of the rarest poets of the century, was born at Bredfield, in Suffolk, on the 31st March, 1809. He was the third son of John Purcell, of Kilkenny, in Ireland, who, marrying Miss Mary Frances Fitzgerald, daughter of John Fitzgerald, of Williamstown, County Waterford, added that distinguished name to his own patronymic; and the future Omar was thus doubly of Irish extraction. (Both the families of Purcell and Fitzgerald claim descent from Norman warriors of the eleventh century.) This circumstance is thought to have had some influence in attracting him to the study of Persian poetry, Iran and Erin being almost convertible terms in the early days of modern ethnology. After some years of primary education at the grammar school of Bury St. Edmunds, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1826, and there formed acquaintance with several young men of great abilities, most of whom rose to distinction before him, but never ceased to

regard with affectionate remembrance the quiet and amiable associate of their college-days. Amongst them were Alfred Tennyson, James Spedding, William Bodham Donne, John Mitchell Kemble, and William Makepeace Thackeray; and their long friendship has been touchingly referred to by the Laureate in dedicating his last poem to the memory of Edward Fitzgerald. "Euphranor," our author's earliest printed work, affords a curious picture of his academic life and associations. Its substantial reality is evident beneath the thin disguise of the symbolical or classical names which he gives to the personages of the colloquy; and the speeches which he puts into his own mouth are full of the humorous gravity, the whimsical and kindly philosophy, which remained his distinguishing characteristics till the end. This book was first published in 1851; a second and a third edition were printed some years later; all anonymous, and each of the latter two differing from its predecessor by changes in the text which were not indicated on the title-pages.

"Euphranor" furnishes a good many characterizations which would be useful for any writer treating upon Cambridge society in the third decade of this century. Kenelm Digby, the author of the "Broadstone of Honour," had left Cambridge before the time when Euphranor held his "dialogue," but he is picturesquely recollected as "a grand swarthy fellow who might have stepped out of the canvas of some knightly

portrait in his father's hall—perhaps the living image of one sleeping under some cross-legged *effigies* in the church." In "Euphranor" it is easy to discover the earliest phase of the unconquerable attachment which Fitzgerald entertained for his college, and his life-long friends, and which induced him in later days to make frequent visits to Cambridge, renewing and refreshing the old ties of custom and friendship. In fact, his disposition was affectionate to a fault, and he betrayed his consciousness of weakness in that respect by referring playfully at times to "a certain natural lubricity" which he attributed to the Irish character, and professed to discover especially in himself. This amiability of temper endeared him to many friends of totally dissimilar tastes and qualities; and, by enlarging his sympathies, enabled him to enjoy the fructifying influence of studies pursued in communion with scholars more profound than himself, but less gifted with the power of expression. One of the younger Cambridge men with whom he became intimate during his periodical pilgrimages to the university was Edward B. Cowell, a man of the highest attainment in Oriental learning, who resembled Fitzgerald himself in the possession of a warm and genial heart, and the most unobtrusive modesty. From Cowell he could easily learn that the hypothetical affinity between the names of Erin and Iran belong to an obsolete stage of etymology; but the attraction of a far-fetched theory was replaced by the charm of reading Persian poetry

in companionship with his young friend, who was equally competent to enjoy and to analyze the beauties of a literature that formed a portion of his regular studies. They read together the poetical remains of Khayyám—a choice of reading which sufficiently indicates the depth and range of Mr. Cowell's knowledge. Omar Khayyám, although not quite forgotten, enjoyed in the history of Persian literature a celebrity like that of Occleve and Gower in our own. In the many *Tazkirat* (memoirs or memorials) of poets he was mentioned and quoted with esteem; but his poems, laboring as they did under the original sin of heresy and atheism, were seldom looked at, and from lack of demand on the part of readers had become rarer than those of most other writers since the days of Firdausi. European scholars knew little of his works beyond his Arabic treatise on Algebra, and Mr. Cowell may be said to have disentombed his poems from oblivion. Now, thanks to the fine taste of that scholar, and to the transmuting genius of Fitzgerald, no Persian poet is so well known in the western world as Abu-'l-fat'h 'Omar, son of Ibranim the Tent-maker of Naishápúr, whose manhood synchronizes with the Norman conquest of England, and who took for his poetic name (*takhallus*) the designation of his father's trade (*Khayyam*). The *Rubáiyyat* (Quatrains) do not comprise a single poem divided into a certain number of stanzas; there is no continuity of plan in them, and each stanza is a distinct thought expressed in musical verse. There

is no other element of unity in them than the general tendency of the Epicurean idea, and the arbitrary divan form by which they are grouped according to the alphabetical arrangement of the final letters; those in which the rhymes end in *a* constituting the first division, those with *b* the second, and so on. The peculiar attitude towards religion and the old questions of fate, immortality, the origin and the destiny of man, which educated thinkers have assumed in the present age of Christendom, is found admirably foreshadowed in the fantastic verses of Khayyám, who was no more of a Mohammedan than many of our best writers are Christians. His philosophical and Horatian fancies—graced as they are by the charms of a lyrical expression equal to that of Horace, and a vivid brilliance of imagination to which the Roman poet could make no claim—exercised a powerful influence upon Fitzgerald's mind, and colored his thoughts to such a degree that even when he oversteps the largest license allowed to a translator, his phrases reproduce the spirit and manner of his original with a nearer approach to perfection than would appear possible. It is usually supposed that there is more of Fitzgerald than of Khayyám in the English *Rabáiyyat*, and that the old Persian simply afforded themes for the Anglo-Irishman's display of poetic power; but nothing could be further from the truth. The French translator, J. B. Nicolas, and the English one, Mr. Whinfield, supply a closer mechanical reflection of the sense in each

separate stanza, but Mr. Fitzgerald has, in some instances, given a version equally close and exact; in others, rejointed scattered phrases from more than one stanza of his original, and thus accomplished a feat of marvelous poetical transfusion. He frequently turns literally into English the strange outlandish imagery which Mr. Whinfield thought necessary to replace by more intelligible banalities, and in this way the magic of his genius has successfully transplanted into the garden of English poesy exotics that bloom like native flowers.

One of Mr. Fitzgerald's Woodbridge friends was Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, with whom he maintained for many years the most intimate and cordial intercourse, and whose daughter Lucy he married. He wrote the memoir of his friend's life which appeared in the posthumous volume of Barton's poems. The story of his married life was a short one. With all the overflowing amiability of his nature, there were mingled certain peculiarities or waywardnesses which were more suitable to the freedom of celibacy than to the staidness of matrimonial life. A separation took place by mutual agreement, and Fitzgerald behaved in this circumstance with the generosity and unselfishness which were apparent in all his whims no less than in his more deliberate actions. Indeed, his entire career was marked by an unchanging goodness of heart and a genial kindliness; and no one could complain of having ever endured hurt or ill-treatment

at his hands. His pleasures were innocent and simple. Amongst the more delightful, he counted the short coasting trips, occupying no more than a day or two at a time, which he used to make in his own yacht from Lowestoft, accompanied only by a crew of two men, and such a friend as Cowell, with a large pasty and a few bottles of wine to supply their material wants. It is needless to say that books were also put into the cabin, and that the symposia of the friends were thus brightened by communion with the minds of the great departed. Fitzgerald's enjoyment of gnomic wisdom enshrined in words of exquisite propriety was evinced by the frequency with which he used to read Montaigne's essays and Madame de Sévigné's letters, and the various works from which he extracted and published his collection of wise saws entitled "Polonius." This taste was allied to a love for what was classical and correct in literature, by which he was also enabled to appreciate the prim and formal muse of Crabbe, in whose grandson's house he died.

His second printed work was the "Polonius," already referred to, which appeared in 1852. It exemplifies his favorite reading, being a collection of extracts, sometimes short proverbial phrases, sometimes longer pieces of characterization or reflection, arranged under abstract headings. He occasionally quotes Dr. Johnson, for whom he entertained sincere admiration; but the pondorous and artificial fabric of Johnsonese

did not please him like the language of Bacon, Fuller, Sir Thomas Browne, Coleridge, whom he cites frequently. A disproportionate abundance of wise words was drawn from Carlyle; his original views, his forcible sense, and the friendship with which Fitzgerald regarded him, having apparently blinded the latter to the ungainly style and ungraceful mannerisms of the Chelsea sage. (It was Thackeray who first made them personally acquainted forty years ago; and Fitzgerald remained always loyal to his first instincts of affection and admiration.*) Polonius also marks the period of his earliest attention to Persian studies, as he quotes it in the great Sufi poet Jalál-ud-dín-Rúmí, whose *Masnavi* has lately been translated into English by Mr. Redhouse, but whom Fitzgerald can only have seen in the original. He, however, spells the name *Jallaladin*, an incorrect form of which he could not have been guilty at the time when he produced Omar Khayyám, and which thus betrays that he had not

* The close relation that subsisted between Fitzgerald and Carlyle has lately been made patent by an article in the *Historical Review* upon the Squire papers—those celebrated documents purporting to be contemporary records of Cromwell's time—which were accepted by Carlyle as genuine, but which other scholars have asserted from internal evidence to be modern forgeries. However the question may be decided, the fact which concerns us here is that our poet was the negotiator between Mr. Squire and Carlyle, and that his correspondence with the latter upon the subject reveals the intimate nature of their acquaintance.

long been engaged with Irani literature. He was very fond of Montaigne's essays, and of Pascal's Pensées; but his Polonius reveals a sort of dislike and contempt for Voltaire. Amongst the Germans, Jean Paul, Goethe, Alexander von Humboldt, and August Wilhelm von Schlegel attracted him greatly; but he seems to have read little German, and probably only quoted translations. His favorite motto was "Plain Living and High Thinking," and he expresses great reverence for all things manly, simple, and true. The laws and institutions of England were, in his eyes, of the highest value and sacredness; and whatever Irish sympathies he had would never have diverted his affections from the Union to Home Rule. This is strongly illustrated by some original lines of blank verse at the end of Polonius, annexed to his quotation, under "Æsthetics," of the words in which Lord Palmerston eulogized Mr. Gladstone for having devoted his Neapolitan tour to an inspection of the prisons.

Fitzgerald's next printed work was a translation of Six Dramas of Calderon, published in 1853, which was unfavorably received at the time, and consequently withdrawn by him from circulation. His name appeared on the title-page—a concession to publicity which was so unusual with him that it must have been made under strong pressure from his friends. The book is in nervous blank verse, a mode of composition which he handled with great ease and skill. There is no waste of power in diffuseness and no

employment of unnecessary epithets. It gives the impression of a work of the Shakespearean age, and reveals a kindred felicity, strength, and directness of language. It deserves to rank with his best efforts in poetry, but its ill-success made him feel that the publication of his name was an unfavorable experiment, and he never again repeated it. His great modesty, however, would sufficiently account for this shyness. Of "Omar Khayyám," even after the little book had won its way to general esteem, he used to say that the suggested addition of his name on the title would imply an assumption of importance which he considered that his "transmogrification" of the Persian poet did not possess.

Fitzgerald's conception of a translator's privilege is well set forth in the prefaces of his versions from Calderon, and the Agamemnon of Æschylus. He maintained that, in the absence of the perfect poet, who shall re-create in his own language the body and soul of his original, the best system is that of a paraphrase conserving the spirit of the author—a sort of literary metempsychosis. Calderon, Æschylus, and Omar Khayyám were all treated with equal license so far as form is concerned—the last, perhaps, the most arbitrarily; but the result is not unsatisfactory, as having given us perfect English poems instinct with the true flavor of their prototypes. The Persian was probably somewhat more Horatian and less melancholy, the Greek a little less florid and mystic, the Spaniard more

lyrical and fluent, than their metaphrast has made them; but the essential spirit has not escaped in transfusion. Only a man of singular gifts could have performed the achievement, and these works attest Mr. Fitzgerald's right to rank amongst the finest poets of the century. About the same time as he printed his Calderon, another set of translations from the same dramatist was published by the late D. F. MacCarthy, a scholar whose acquaintance with Castilian literature was much deeper than Mr. Fitzgerald's, and who also possessed poetical abilities of no mean order, with a totally different sense of the translator's duty. The popularity of MacCarthy's versions has been considerable, and as an equivalent rendering of the original in sense and form his work is valuable. Spaniards familiar with the English language rate its merit highly; but there can be little question of the very great superiority of Mr. Fitzgerald's work as a contribution to English literature. It is indeed only from this point of view that we should regard all the literary labors of our author. They are English poetical work of fine quality, dashed with a pleasant outlandish flavor, which heightens their charm; and it is as English poems, not as translations, that they have endeared themselves even more to the American-English than to the mixed Britons of England.

It was an occasion of no small moment to Mr. Fitzgerald's fame, and to the intellectual gratification of many thousands of readers, when he took his little

packet of *Ruba'iyyat* to Mr. Quaritch in the latter part of the year 1858. It was printed as a small quarto pamphlet, bearing the publisher's name, but not the author's; and although apparently a complete failure at first—a failure which Mr. Fitzgerald regretted less on his own account than on that of his publisher, to whom he had generously made a present of the book—received, nevertheless, a sufficient distribution by being quickly reduced from the price of five shillings and placed in the box of cheap books marked a penny each. Thus forced into circulation, the two hundred copies which had been printed were soon exhausted. Among the buyers were Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, Captain (now Sir Richard) Burton, and Mr. William Simpson, the accomplished artist of the *Illustrated London News*. The influence exercised by the first three, especially by Rossetti, upon a clique of young men who have since grown to distinction, was sufficient to attract observation to the singular beauties of the poem anonymously translated from the Persian. Most readers had no possible opportunity of discovering whether it was a disguised original or an actual translation—even Captain Burton enjoyed probably but little chance of seeing a manuscript of the Persian Rubáiyyat. The Oriental imagery and allusions were too thickly scattered throughout the verses to favor the notion that they could be the original work of an Englishman; yet it was shrewdly suspected by most of the appreciative readers that the "translator" was

substantially the author and creator of the poem. In the refuge of his anonymity Fitzgerald derived an innocent gratification from the curiosity that was aroused on all sides. After the first edition had disappeared, inquiries for the little book became frequent, and in the year 1868 he gave the MS. of his second edition to Mr. Quaritch, and the Rubáiyyát came into circulation once more, but with several alterations and additions, by which the number of stanzas was somewhat increased beyond the original seventy-five. Most of the changes were, as might have been expected, improvements; but in some instances the author's taste or caprice was at fault—notably in the first *Rubá'iy*. His fastidious desire to avoid anything that seemed *baroque* or unnatural, or appeared like plagiarism, may have influenced him; but it was probably because he had already used the idea in his rendering of Jámi's Salámán, that he sacrificed a fine and novel piece of imagery in his first stanza and replaced it by one of much more ordinary character. If it were from a dislike to pervert his original too largely, he had no need to be so scrupulous, since he dealt on the whole with the Rubáiyyát as though he had the license of absolute authorship, changing, transposing, and manipulating the substance of the Persian quatrains with singular freedom. The vogue of "Old Omar" (as he would affectionately call his work) went on increasing, and American readers took it up with eagerness. In those days, the mere mention of Omar Khayyám

between two strangers meeting fortuitously acted like a sign of freemasonry, and established frequently a bond of friendship. Some curious instances of this have been related. A remarkable feature of the Omar-cult in the United States was the circumstance that single individuals bought numbers of copies for gratuitous distribution before the book was reprinted in America. Its editions have been relatively numerous, when we consider how restricted was the circle of readers who could understand the peculiar beauties of the work. A third edition appeared in 1872, with some further alterations, and may be regarded as virtually the author's final revision, for it hardly differs at all from the text of the fourth edition, which appeared in 1879. This last formed the first portion of a volume entitled "Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám; and the Salámán and Absál of Jámi; rendered into English verse." The Salámán (which had already been printed in separate form in 1856) is a poem chiefly in blank verse, interspersed with various metres (although it is all in one measure in the original), embodying a love-story of mystic significance; for Jámi was, unlike Omar Khayyám, a true Sufi, and indeed differed in other respects, his celebrity as a pious Mussulman doctor being equal to his fame as a poet. He lived in the fifteenth century, in a period of literary brilliance and decay; and the rich exuberance of his poetry, full of far-fetched conceits, involved expressions, overstrained imagery, and false taste, offers a strong contrast to the simpler and

more forcible language of Khayyám. There is little use of Arabic in the earlier poet; he preferred the vernacular speech to the mongrel language which was fashioned among the heirs of the Saracen conquerors; but Jámí's composition is largely embroidered with Arabic.

Mr. Fitzgerald had from his early days been thrown into contact with the Crabbe family; the Reverend George Crabbe (the poet's grandson) was an intimate friend of his, and it was on a visit to Morton Rectory that Fitzgerald died. As we know that friendship has power to warp the judgment, we shall not probably be wrong in supposing that his enthusiastic admiration for Crabbe's poems was not the product of sound, impartial criticism. He attempted to reintroduce them to the world by publishing a little volume of "Readings from Crabbe," produced in the last year of his life, but without success. A different fate awaited his "Agamemnon: a tragedy taken from Æschylus," which was first printed privately by him, and afterwards published with alterations in 1876. It is a very free rendering from the Greek, and full of a poetical beauty which is but partly assignable to Æschylus. Without attaining to anything like the celebrity and admiration which have followed Omar Khayyám, the Agamemnon has achieved much more than a *succès d'estime*. Mr. Fitzgerald's renderings from the Greek were not confined to this one essay; he also translated the two Oedipus dramas of Sophocles, but left them unfinished in manu-

script till Prof. Eliot Norton had a sight of them about seven or eight years ago and urged him to complete his work. When this was done, he had them set in type; but only a very few proofs can have been struck off, as it seems that, at least in England, no more than one or two copies were sent out by the author. In a similar way he printed translations of two of Calderon's plays not included in the published "Six Dramas"—namely, *La Vida es Sueno* and *El Magico Prodigioso* (both ranking among the Spaniard's finest work); but they also were withheld from the public and all but half a dozen friends.

When his old boatman died, about ten years ago, he abandoned his nautical exercises, and gave up his yacht for ever. During the last few years of his life he divided his time between Cambridge, Crabbe's house, and his own home at Little Grange, near Woodbridge, where he received occasional visits from friends and relatives.

This edition of the "Omar Khayyám" is a modest memorial of one of the most modest men who have enriched English literature with poetry of distinct and permanent value. His best epitaph is found in Tennyson's "Tiresias and other poems," published immediately after our author's quiet exit from life, in 1883, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

M. K.

A ROSE-TREE FROM OMAR'S TOMB.

The Athenaeum of October 7 prints the following "Inscription," written by Mr. Edmund Gosse for the rose-tree brought by Mr. W. Simpson from Omar Khayyâm's tomb and planted on that day on the grave of Edward Fitzgerald at Boulge, Suffolk:—

"Reign here, triumphant rose from Omar's grave,
Borne by a fakir o'er the Persian wave;
Reign with fresh pride, since here a heart is sleeping
That double glory to your Master gave.

"Hither let many a pilgrim step be bent
To greet the rose re-risen in banishment;
Here richer crimsons may its cup be keeping
Than brimmed it ere from Naishápúr it went."

Almost ten years ago an Englishman took a handful of hips from the rose-trees near Omar's grave at Naishápúr—roses planted, as one of his pupils records, in obedience to the poet's wishes.

OMAR KHAYYÁM'S GRAVE.

IN reference to the allusion quoted from Nizami (on page lx) to Omar Khayyám's prophecy about his own grave, the following letter from Nishapur will have a considerable interest. The writer is a man of wide reputation as one of the traveling artists of the *Illustrated London News*:

Nishapur, 27th October, 1884.

Dear Mr. Quaritch:

From the association of your name with that of Omar Khayam I feel sure that what I enclose in this letter will be acceptable. The rose-leaves I gathered to-day, growing beside the tomb of the poet at this place, and the seeds are from the same bushes on which the leaves grew.*

I suppose you are aware that I left early last month with Sir Peter Lumsden to accompany the

* These seeds were handed over to Mr. Baker, of Kew Gardens, who planted them, and they have grown up successfully, but as yet they have not produced flowers.

Afghan Boundary Commission in my old capacity as special artist for the *Illustrated London News*. We traveled by way of the Black Sea, Tiflis, Baku, and the Caspian, to Teheran; from that place we have been marching eastward for nearly a month now, and we reached Nishapur this morning.

For some days past, as we marched along, I have been making inquiries regarding Omar Khayam and Nishapur; I wanted to know if the house he lived in still existed, or if any spot was yet associated with his name. It would seem that the only recognized memorial now remaining of him is his tomb. Our Mehmandar, or "Guest-conductor"—while the Afghan Boundary Commission is on Persian territory it is the guest of the Shah, and the Mehmandar is his representative, who sees that all our wants are attended to—appears to be familiar with the poet's name, and says that his works are still read and admired. The Mehmandar said he knew the tomb, and promised to be our guide when we reached Nishapur. We have just made the pilgrimage to the spot; it is about two miles south of the present Nishapur; so we had to ride, and Sir Peter, who takes an interest in the matter, was one of the party. We found the ground nearly all the way covered with mounds, and the soil mixed with fragments of pottery, sure indications of former habitations. As we neared the tomb, long ridges of earth could be seen, which were no doubt the remains of the walls of the old city of Nishapur. To the east of the tomb is a large

square mound of earth, which is supposed to be the site of the Ark, or citadel of the original city. As we rode along, the blue dome, which the Mehmandar had pointed out on the way as the tomb, had a very imposing appearance, and its importance improved as we neared it; this will be better understood by stating that city walls, houses, and almost all structures in that part of Persia are built of mud. The blue dome, as well as its size, produced in my mind, as we went towards it, a great satisfaction; it was pleasing to think that the countrymen of Omar Khayam held him in such high estimation as to erect so fine a monument, as well as to preserve it—this last being rarely done in the East—to his memory. If the poet was so honored in his own country, it was little to be wondered at that his fame should have spread so rapidly in the lands of the West. This I thought, but there was a slight disappointment in store for me. At last we reached the tomb, and found its general arrangements were on a plan I was familiar with in India; whoever has visited the Taj at Agra, or any of the large Mohammedan tombs of Hindostan, will easily understand the one at Nishapur. The monument stands in a space enclosed by a mud wall, and the ground in front is laid out as a garden, with walks. The tomb at Nishapur, with all its surroundings, is in a very rude condition; it never was a work which could claim merit for its architecture, and although it is kept so far in repair, it has still a very decayed and neglected appearance. Even the blue

dome, which impressed me in the distance, I found, on getting near to it, was in a ruinous state from large portions of the enameled plaster having fallen off. Instead of the marble and the red stone of the Taj at Nishapur—with the exception of some enameled tiles producing a pattern around the base of the dome, and also in the spandrels of the door and windows—there we find only bricks and plaster. The surrounding wall of the enclosure was of crumbling mud, and could be easily jumped over at any place. There is a rude entrance by which we went in and walked to the front of the tomb; all along I had been under the notion that the whole structure was the tomb of Omar Khayam; and now came the disenchantment. The place turned out to be an Imamzadah, or the tomb of the son of an Imam. The son of an Imam inherits his sanctity from his father, and his place of burial becomes a holy place where pilgrims go to pray. The blue dome is over the tomb of such a person, who may have been a brute of the worst kind—that would not have affected his sanctity—instead of the poet, whom we reverence for the qualities which belonged to himself. When we had ascended the platform, about three feet high, on which the tomb stood, the Mehmandar turned to the left, and in a recess formed by three arches and a very rude roof, which seemed to have been added to the corner of the Imamzadah, pointed to the tomb of Omar Khayam. The discovery of a "Poet's Corner" at Nishapur naturally recalled Westminster Abbey to my mind, and

revived my spirits from the depression produced by finding that the principal tomb was not that of the poet. The monument over the tomb is an oblong mass of brick covered with plaster, and without ornament—the plaster falling off in places; on this and on the plaster of the recess are innumerable scribblings in Persian character. Some were, no doubt, names, for the British John Smith has not an exclusive tendency in this respect; but many of them were continued through a number of lines, and I guessed they were poetry, and most probably quotations from the Rubaiyat. Although the "Poet's Corner" was in rather a dilapidated state, still it must have been repaired at no very distant date; and this shows that some attention has been paid to it, and that the people of Nishapur have not quite forgotten Omar Khayam.

The Imamzadah—this word, which means Son of an Imam, applies to the person buried as well as to the tomb—was Mohammed Marook, brother of the Imam Reza, whose tomb at Meshed is considered so sacred by the Shias; the Imam Reza was the eighth Imam, and died in 818; this gives us an approximate date for his brother, and it is, if I mistake not, a couple of centuries before the time of Omar Khayam; and the Imamzadah —here I mean the building—would have been erected, most probably, about that number of years before the poet required his resting-place. Behind the Imamzadah is a Kubberstan, or "Region of Graves," and the raised platform in front of the tomb contains in its rough

pavement a good many small tomb-stones, showing that people are buried there, and that the place had been in the past a general grave-yard. All this is owing to the hereditary sanctity which belongs to the son of an Imam, and we are perhaps indebted to Mohammed Marook, no matter what his character may have been, for the preservation of the site of Omar Khayam's burial place; the preservation of the one necessarily preserved the other.

In front of the Imamzadah is the garden, with some very old and one or two large trees, but along the edge of the platform in front of Omar Khayam's tomb I found some rose bushes; it was too late in the season for the roses, but a few hips were still remaining, and one or two of these I secured, as well as the leaves—some of which are here enclosed for you. I hope you will be able to grow them in England; they will have an interest, as in all probability they are the particular kind of roses Omar Khayam was so fond of watching as he pondered and composed his verses.

It may be worth adding that there is also at Nishapur the tomb of another poet who lived about the same time as Omar Khayam—his name was Ferid ed din Attar; according to Vambery, he was "a great mystic and philosopher. He wrote a work called 'Mantik et Teyr, the Logic of Birds.' In this the feathered creatures are made to contend in a curious way on the causes of existence, and the Source of Truth. 'Hudhud,' the All-knowing magical bird of

Solomon, is introduced, as the Teacher of Birds; and also Simurg, the Phoenix of the Orientals, and Symbol of the Highest Light." In this it is understood that the Birds represent Humanity, Hudhud is the Prophet, and the Simurg stands for Deity. This tomb I shall not have time to visit. Another three marches take us to Meshed, and then we shall be close to the Afghan frontier. I am sending a sketch of Omar Khayam's tomb to the *Illustrated London News*.

Believe me

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM SIMPSON.

OMAR KHAYYAM.

"Sayer of sooth, and searcher of dim skies!
Lover of Song, and Sun, and Summertide,
For whom so many roses bloomed and died;
Tender Interpreter, most sadly wise,
Of earth's dumb, inarticulated cries!
Time's self cannot estrange us, nor divide;
Thy hand still beckons from the garden-side,
Through green vine-garlands, when the Winter dies.

"Thy calm lips smile on us, thine eyes are wet;
The nightingale's full song sobs all through thine,
And thine in hers—part human, part divine!
Among the deathless gods thy place is set,
All-wise, but drowsy with Life's mingled Wine,
Laughter and Learning, Passion and Regret."

Graham R. Tomson.

Inscribed to A. L. (Andrew Lang).

"Omar, dear Sultan of the Persian Song,
Familiar friend, whom I have loved so long,
Whose volume made my pleasant hiding-place
From this fantastic world of right and wrong.

"My youth lies buried in thy verses: lo,
I read, and as the haunted numbers flow,
My memory turns in anguish to the face
That leaned o'er Omar's pages long ago.

"Alas for me, alas for all who weep
And wonder at the silence dark and deep
That girdles round this little lamp in space
No wiser than when Omar fell asleep.

"Rest in thy grave beneath the crimson rain
Of heart-desired roses. Life is vain,
And vain the trembling legends we may trace
Upon the open book that shuts again."

Justin Huntly McCarthy.

OMAR KHAYYÁM,

THE ASTRONOMER POET OF PERSIA.

By EDWARD FITZGERALD.

MAR KHAYYÁM was born at Naishápúr, in Khorasan, in the latter half of our eleventh, and died within the first quarter of our twelfth century. The slender story of his life is curiously twined about that of two other very considerable figures in their time and country: one of whom tells the story of all three. This was Nizám-ul-Mulk, Vizyr to Alp Arslan the Son, and Malik Shah the Grandson, of Toghrul Beg the Tartar, who had wrested Persia from the feeble successor of Mahmúd the Great, and founded that Seljukian Dynasty which finally roused Europe into the Crusades. This Nizám-ul-Mulk, in his *Wasiyat*—or *Testament*—which he wrote and left as a memorial for future statesmen—relates the following, as quoted in the *Calcutta Review*, No. 59, from Mirkhond's History of the Assassins:—

"'One of the greatest of the wise men of Khorassan was the Imám Mowaffak of Naishápúr, a man highly honored and reverenced—may God rejoice his soul; his illustrious years exceeded eighty-five, and it

was the universal belief that every boy who read the Koran or studied the traditions in his presence would assuredly attain to honor and happiness. For this cause did my father send me from Tús to Naishápúr with Abd-us-samad, the doctor of law, that I might employ myself in study and learning under the guidance of that illustrious teacher. Towards me he ever turned an eye of favor and kindness, and, as his pupil, I felt for him extreme affection and devotion, so that I passed four years in his service. When I first came there, I found two other pupils of mine own age newly arrived, Hakim Omar Khayyám, and the ill-fated Ben Sabbáh. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit and the highest natural powers; and we three formed a close friendship together. When the Imám rose from his lectures, they used to join me, and we repeated to each other the lessons we had heard. Now, Omar was a native of Naishápúr, while Hasan Ben Sabbáh's father was one Alí, a man of austere life and practice, but heretical in his creed and doctrine. One day Hasan said to me and to Khayyám, 'It is a universal belief that the pupils of the Imám Mowaffak will attain to fortune. Now, even if we *all* do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then shall be our mutual pledge and bond?' We answered, 'Be it what you please.' 'Well,' he said, 'let us make a vow, that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself.' 'Be it so,' we both replied, and on those terms we mutu-

ally pledged our words. Years rolled on, and I went from Khorassan to Transoxiana, and wandered to Ghazni and Cabul; and when I returned, I was invested with office, and rose to be administrator of affairs during the Sultanate of Sultan Alp Arslán.'

"He goes on to state that years passed by, and both his old school-friends found him out, and came and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the school-day vow. The Vizier was generous and kept his word. Hasan demanded a place in the government, which the Sultan granted at the Vizier's request; but discontented with a gradual rise, he plunged into the maze of intrigue of an Oriental court, and, failing in a base attempt to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and fell. After many mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the *Ismaïlians* —a party of fanatics who had long murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong and evil will. In A. D. 1090 he seized the castle of Alamút, in the province of Rúdbar, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian sea; and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the Crusaders as the OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS, and spread terror through the Mohammedan world; and it is yet disputed whether the word *Assassin*, which they have left in the language of modern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the *hashish* or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian *bhang*), with which they maddened themselves to the

sullen pitch of Oriental desperation, or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quiet collegiate days at Naishápúr. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's dagger was Nizám-ul-Mulk himself, the old school-boy friend.*

"Omar Khayyám also came to the Vizier to claim the share; but not to ask for title or office. 'The greatest boon you can confer on me,' he said, 'is to let me live in a corner under the shadow of your fortune, to spread wide the advantages of Science, and pray for your long life and prosperity.' The Vizier tells us, that when he found Omar was really sincere in his refusal, he pressed him no further, but granted him a yearly pension of twelve hundred *mithkals* of gold from the treasury at Naishápúr.

"At Naishápúr thus lived and died Omar Khayyám, 'busied,' adds the Vizier, 'in winning knowledge of every kind, and especially in Astronomy, wherein he attained to a very high pre-eminence. Under the Sultanate of Malik Shah, he came to Merv, and obtained great praise for his proficiency in science, and the Sultan showered favors upon him.'

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*Some of Omar's Rubáiyát warn us of the danger of Greatness, the instability of Fortune, and while advocating Charity to all Men, recommending us to be too intimate with none. Attár makes Nizám-ul-Mulk use the very words of his friend Omar [Rub. xxviii]: "When Nizám-ul-Mulk was in the agony (of Death) he said, 'O God! I am passing away in the hand of the Wind.'"

"When Malik Shah determined to reform the calendar, Omar was one of the eight learned men employed to do it; the result was the *Jalali* era (so called from *Jalal-u-din*, one of the king's names)—'a computation of time,' says Gibbon, 'which surpasses the Julian, and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.' He is also the author of some astronomical tables, entitled Ziji-Malikshâhi," and the French have lately republished and translated an Arabic treatise of his on Algebra.

"His Takhallus or poetical name (Khayyâm) signifies a Tent-maker, and he is said to have at one time exercised that trade, perhaps before Nizâm-ul-Mulk's generosity raised him to independence. Many Persian poets similarly derive their names from their occupations; thus we have Attâr 'a druggist,' Assâr 'an oil presser,' etc.* Omar himself alludes to his name in the following whimsical lines:—

'Khayyâm, who stitched the tents of science,
Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly burned;
The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,
And the broker of Hope has sold him for nothing!'

"We have only one more anecdote to give of his Life, and that relates to the close; it is told in the anonymous preface which is sometimes prefixed to his

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*Though all these, like our Smiths, Archers, Millers, Fletchers, etc., may simply retain the surname of an hereditary calling.

poems; it has been printed in the Persian in the appendix to Hyde's *Veterum Persarum Religio*, p. 499; and D'Herbelot alludes to it in his Bibliothèque, under *Khiam*: *

"'It is written in the chronicles of the ancients that this King of the Wise, Omar Khayyám, died at Naishápúr in the year of the Hegira 517 (A. D. 1123); in science he was unrivaled—the very paragon of his age.' Khwájah Nizámi of Samarcand, who was one of his pupils, relates the following story: 'I often used to hold conversations with my teacher, Omar Khayyám, in a garden; and one day he said to me, 'My tomb shall be in a spot where the north wind may scatter roses over it.' I wondered at the words he spake, but I knew that his were no idle words.† Years after, when

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* "Philosophe Musulman qui a vécu en Odeur de Sainteté dans la Fin du premier et le Commencement du second Siècle," no part of which, except the "Philosophe," can apply to *our* Khayyám.

† The Rashness of the Words, according to D'Herbelot, consisted in being so opposed to those in the Korán: "No Man knows where he shall die."—This Story of Omar reminds me of another so naturally—and, when one remembers how wide of his humble mark the noble sailor aimed—so pathetically told by Captain Cook—not by Doctor Hawkesworth—in his second voyage. When leaving Ulietea, "Orea's last request was for me to return. When he saw he could not obtain that promise, he asked the name of my *Marai*—Burying-place. As strange a question as this was, I hesitated not a moment to tell him 'Stepney,' the parish in which I live when in London. I was made to repeat it several times over till

I chanced to revisit Naishápúr, I went to his final resting-place, and lo! it was just outside a garden, and trees laden with fruit stretched their boughs over the garden wall, and dropped their flowers upon his tomb, so as the stone was hidden under them.'"

Thus far—without fear of Trespass—from the *Calcutta Review*. The writer of it, on reading in India this story of Omar's Grave, was reminded, he says, of Cicero's Account of finding Archimedes' Tomb at Syracuse buried in grass and weeds. I think Thorwaldsen desired to have roses grow over him—a wish religiously fulfilled for him to the present day, I believe. However, to return to Omar.

Though the Sultan "shower'd Favors upon him," Omar's Epicurean Audacity of Thought and Speech caused him to be regarded askance in his own time and Country. He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Súfis, whose Practice he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounts to little more than his own when stript of the Mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not hide. Their Poets, including Háfiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausi) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely,

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they could pronounce it; and then 'Stepney Marai no Tootee' was echoed through a hundred mouths at once. I afterwards found the same question had been put to Mr. Forster by a man on shore; but he gave a different and indeed more proper answer, by saying, 'No man who used the sea could say where he should be buried.'"

indeed, of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical Use more convenient to Themselves and the People they addressed; a People quite as quick of Doubt as of Belief; as keen of Bodily Sense as of Intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between Heaven and Earth, and this World and the Next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either. Omar was too honest of Heart as well as of Head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any World but This, he set about making the most of it; preferring rather to soothe the Soul through the Senses into Acquiescence with Things as he saw them, than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what they *might be*. It has been seen, however, that his Worldly Ambition was not exorbitant; and he very likely takes a humorous or perverse pleasure in exalting the gratification of Sense above that of the Intellect, in which he must have taken great delight, although it failed to answer the Questions in which he, in common with all men, was most vitally interested.

For whatever Reason, however, Omar, as before said, has never been popular in his own Country, and therefore has been but scantily transmitted abroad. The MSS. of his Poems, mutilated beyond the average Casualties of Oriental Transcription, are so rare in the East as scarce to have reached Westward at all, in spite of all the acquisitions of Arms and Science. There is

no copy at the India House, none at the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. We know of but one in England: No. 140 of the Ouseley MSS. at the Bodleian, written at Shiraz, A.D. 1460. This contains but 158 Rubáiyát. One in the Asiatic Society's Library at Calcutta (of which we have a copy) contains (and yet incomplete) 516, though swelled to that by all kinds of Repetition and Corruption. So Von Hammer speaks of *his* copy as containing about 200, while Dr. Sprenger catalogues the Lucknow MS. at double that number.* The Scribes, too, of the Oxford and Calcutta MSS. seem to do their Work under a sort of Protest; each beginning with a Tetrastich (whether genuine or not), taken out of its alphabetical order: the Oxford with one of Apology; the Calcutta with one of Expostulation, supposed (says a Notice prefixed to the MS.) to have risen from a Dream in which Omar's mother asked about his future fate. It may be rendered thus:—

> "O Thou who burn'st in Heart for those who burn
> In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in turn;
> How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God!'
> Why, who art Thou to teach, and He to learn?"

The Bodleian Quatrain pleads Pantheism by way of Justification:—

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* "Since this Paper was written (adds the Reviewer in a note), "we have met with a copy of a very rare Edition, printed at Calcutta in 1836. This contains 438 Tetrastichs, with an Appendix containing 54 others not found in some MSS."

"If I myself upon a looser Creed
Have loosely strung the Jewel of Good deed,
Let this one thing for my Atonement plead:
That One for Two I never did mis-read."

The Reviewer,* to whom I owe the Particulars of Omar's Life, concludes his Review by comparing him with Lucretius, both as to natural Temper and Genius, and as acted upon by the Circumstances in which he lived. Both indeed were men of subtle, strong, and cultivated Intellect, fine Imagination, and Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, Devotion to it; but who yet fell short of replacing what they subverted by such better *Hope* as others, with no better Revelation to guide them, had yet made a law to themselves. Lucretius, indeed, with such material as Epicurus furnished, satisfied himself with the theory of a vast machine fortuitously constructed, and acting by a Law that implied no Legislator; and so composing himself into a Stoical rather than Epicurean severity of Attitude, sat down to contemplate the mechanical Drama of the Universe which he was part Actor in; himself and all about him (as in his own sublime description of the Roman Theatre) discolored with the lurid reflex of the Curtain suspended between the Spectator and the Sun. Omar, more desperate, or more careless of any so complicated System as resulted in nothing but hope-

* Professor Cowell.

less Necessity, flung his own Genius and Learning with a bitter or humorous jest into the general Ruin which their insufficient glimpses only served to reveal; and, pretending sensual pleasure as the serious purpose of Life, only *diverted* himself with speculative problems of Deity, Destiny, Matter and Spirit, Good and Evil, and other such questions, easier to start than to run down, and the pursuit of which becomes a very weary sport at last!

With regard to the present Translation. The original Rubáiyát (as, missing an Arabic Guttural, these *Tetrastichs* are more musically called) are independent Stanzas, consisting each of four Lines of equal, though varied, Prosody; sometimes *all* rhyming, but oftener (as here imitated) the third line a blank, sometimes as in the Greek Alcaic, where the penultimate line seems to lift and suspend the Wave that falls over in the last. As usual with such kind of Oriental Verse, the Rubáiyát follow one another according to Alphabetic Rhyme—a strange succession of Grave and Gay. Those here selected are strung into something of an Eclogue, with perhaps a less than equal proportion of the "Drink and make-merry," which (genuine or not) recurs over-frequently in the Original. Either way, the Result is sad enough: saddest perhaps when most ostentatiously merry: more apt to move Sorrow than Anger toward the old Tent-maker, who, after vainly endeavoring to unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of *To-morrow*, fell back

upon *To-day* (which has outlasted so many To-morrows!) as the only Ground he got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet.

[From the Third Edition.]

While the second Edition of this version of Omar was preparing, Monsieur Nicolas, French Consul at Resht, published a very careful and very good Edition of the Text, from a lithograph copy at Teheran, comprising 464 Rubáiyát with translation and notes of his own.

Monsieur Nicolas, whose Edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material Epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a Mystic, shadowing the Deity under the figure of Wine, Wine-bearer, etc., as Háfiz is supposed to do; in short, a Súfi Poet like Háfiz and the rest.

I cannot see reason to alter my opinion, formed as it was more than a dozen years ago,* when Omar was first shown me by one to whom I am indebted for all I know of Oriental, and very much of other, literature. He admired Omar's Genius so much, that he would gladly have adopted any such Interpretation of his meaning as Mon-

* Written in 1868. [W. A. W.]

sieur Nicolas', if he could.* That he could not, appears by his Paper in the Calcutta Review already so largely quoted; in which he argues from the Poems themselves, as well as from what records remain of the Poet's Life. And if more were needed to disprove Monsieur Nicolas' theory, there is the Biographical Notice which he himself has drawn up in direct contradiction to the Interpretation of the Poems given in his Notes. (See pp. 13-14 of his Preface). Indeed I hardly knew poor Omar was so far gone till his Apologist informed me. For here we see that, whatever were the Wine that Háfiz drank and sang, the veritable Juice of the Grape it was which Omar used, not only when carousing with his friends, but (says Monsieur Nicolas) in order to excite himself to that pitch of Devotion which others reached by cries and "hurlemens." And yet, whenever Wine, Wine-bearer, etc., occur in the Text—which is often enough—Monsieur Nicolas carefully annotates "Dieu," "La Divinité," etc.: so carefully indeed that one is tempted to think that he was indoctrinated by the Súfi with whom he read the Poems. (Note to Rub. ii. p. 8). A Persian would naturally wish to vindicate a distinguished Countryman; and a Súfi to enrol him in his own sect, which already comprises all the chief Poets of Persia.

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* Perhaps would have edited the Poems himself some years ago. He may now as little approve of my Version on one side, as of Monsieur Nicolas' Theory on the other.

What historical Authority has Monsieur Nicolas to show that Omar gave himself up "avec passion à l'étude de la philosophie des Soufis"? (Preface, p. xiii.) The doctrines of Pantheism, Materialism, Necessity, etc., were not peculiar to the Súfi; nor to Lucretius before them; nor to Epicurus before him; probably the very original Irreligion of Thinking men from the first; and very likely to be the spontaneous growth of a Philosopher living in an Age of social and political barbarism, under shadow of one of the Two and Seventy Religions supposed to divide the world. Von Hammer (according to Sprenger's Oriental Catalogue) speaks of Omar as "a Free-thinker, and *a great opponent of Sufism*"; perhaps because, while holding much of their Doctrine, he would not pretend to any inconsistent severity of morals. Sir W. Ouseley has written a Note to something of the same effect on the fly-leaf of the Bodleian MS. And in two Rubáiyát of Monsieur Nicolas' own Edition Súf and Súfi are both disparagingly named.

No doubt many of these Quatrains seem unaccountable unless mystically interpreted; but many more as unaccountable unless literally. Were the Wine spiritual, for instance, how wash the Body with it when dead? Why make cups of the dead clay to be filled with—"La Divinité"—by some succeeding Mystic? Monsieur Nicolas himself is puzzled by some "bizarres" and "trop Orientales" allusions and images—"d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante," indeed—which "les

convenances" do not permit him to translate; but still which the reader cannot but refer to "La Divinité."* No doubt also many of the Quatrains in the Teheran, as in the Calcutta, Copies, are spurious; such *Rubaíyat* being the common form of Epigram in Persia. But this, at best, tells as much one way as another; nay, the Súfi, who may be considered the Scholar and Man of letters in Persia, would be far more likely than the careless Epicure to interpolate what favours his own view of the Poet. I observe that very few of the more mystical Quatrains are in the Bodleian MS., which must be one of the oldest, as dated at Shiraz, A. H. 865, A. D. 1460. And this, I think, especially distinguishes Omar (I cannot help calling him by his—no, not Christian—familiar name) from all other Persian Poets: That, whereas with them the Poet is lost in his Song, the Man in

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* A Note to Quatrain 234 admits that, however clear the mystical meaning of such Images must be to Europeans, they are not quoted without "rougissant" even by laymen in Persia—"Quant aux termes de tendresse qui commencent ce quatrain, comme tant d'autres dans ce recueil, nos lecteurs, habitués, maintenant à l'étrangeté des expressions si souvent employés par Khéyam pour rendre ses pensées sur l'amour divin, et à la singularité des images trop orientales, d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante n'auront pas de peine à se persuader qu'il s'agit de la Divinité, bien que cette conviction soit vivement discutée par les moullahs musulmans, et même par beaucoup de laïques, qui rougissant véritablement d'une pareille licence de leur compatriote à l'égard des choses spirituelles."

Allegory and Abstraction; we seem to have the Man—the *Bonhomme*—Omar himself, with all his Humours and Passions, as frankly before us as if we were really at Table with him, after the Wine had gone round.

I must say that I, for one, never wholly believed in the Mysticism of Háfiz. It does not appear there was any danger in holding and singing Súfi Pantheism so long as the Poet made his Salaam to Mohammed at the beginning and end of his Song. Under such conditions Jeláluddin, Jámi, Attár and others sang; using Wine and Beauty indeed as Images to illustrate, not as a Mask to hide, the Divinity they were celebrating. Perhaps some Allegory less liable to mistake or abuse had been better among so inflammable a People: much more so when, as some think with Háfiz and Omar, the abstract is not only likened to, but identified with, the sensual Image; hazardous, if not to the Devotee himself, yet to his weaker Brethren; and worse for the Profane in proportion as the Devotion of the Initiated grew warmer. And all for what? To be tantalized with Images of sensual enjoyment which must be renounced if one would approximate a God, who, according to the Doctrine, *is* Sensual Matter as well as Spirit, and into whose Universe one expects unconsciously to merge after Death, without hope of any posthumous Beatitude in another world to compensate for all one's self-denial in this. Lucretius' blind Divinity certainly merited, and probably got, as much self-sacrifice as this of the Súfi; and the burden of Omar's Song—if not "Let

us eat"—is assuredly—"Let us drink, for To-morrow we die!" And if Háfiz meant quite otherwise by a similar language, he surely miscalculated when he devoted his Life and Genius to so equivocal a Psalmody as, from his Day to this, has been said and sung by any rather than spiritual Worshippers.

However, as there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favour of Omar's being a Súfi,—and even something of a Saint,—those who please may so interpret his Wine and Cup-bearer. On the other hand, as there is far more historical certainty of his being a Philosopher, of scientific insight and Ability far beyond that of the Age and Country he lived in; of such moderate worldly Ambition as becomes a Philosopher, and such moderate wants as rarely satisfy a Debauchee; other readers may be content to believe with me that, while the Wine Omar celebrates is simply the Juice of the Grape, he bragg'd more than he drank of it, in very Defiance perhaps of that Spiritual Wine which left its Votaries sunk in Hypocrisy or Disgust.

"Keats once entreated some traveller who was going to the East, to take a copy of "Endymion" with him, and when he came to the great Sahara, to cast the volume from him with all his force far away into the yellow waves of sand. It was a delicious, fantastic wish, that the loveliest poem of our later English speech should lie and drift in the remote Sahara, and be covered at last in the sand that has engulfed so many precious things, but none more precious, caravans, and gold, and tissues, and fair slaves, and the chiefs of mighty clans. If I might frame a wish in distant emulation, I would choose that some wanderer to the East, some Burton, some Kinglake, some Warburton, might carry this little book in his saddle-bags, and ride through Khorassan till he came to Naishápúr, and cast it down in the dust before the tomb of Omar Khayyám."

—*Justin Huntly McCarthy.*

C. MERTIN AIKEN
HER BOOK

RUBÁIYÁT

OF

OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR.

FOURTH EDITION.

I.

AKE! For the Sun who scatter'd into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n, and strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

II.

Before the phantom of False morning died,[1]
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
"When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?"

III.

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

IV.

Now the New Year, reviving old Desires,[2]
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the White Hand of Moses on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.[3]

V.

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,[4]
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

VI.

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine[5]
High-piping Péhlevi, with "Wine! Wine! Wine!
Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek[6] of hers to' incarnadine.

VII.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII.

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

IX.

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

X.

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
Let Zál and Rustum bluster as they will,
Or Hátim call to Supper—heed not you.

XI.

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—
And Peace to Máhmúd on his golden Throne!

XII.

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

XIII.

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant drum![8]

XIV.

Look to the blowing Rose about us—"Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."[9]

XV.

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI.

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

XVII.

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

XVIII.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:[10]
And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

XIX.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as were some buried Caesar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

XX.

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XXI.

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the cup that clears
To-day of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.[11]

XXII.

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

XXIII.

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend—ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

XXIV.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

XXV.

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after some To-morrow stare,
A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness cries,
"Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor There."

XXVI.

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so wisely—they are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

XXVII.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

XXVIII.

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

XXIX.

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX.

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

XXXI.

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,[12]
And many a Knot unravell'd by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXII.

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not see:
Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
There was—and then no more of Thee and Me.[13]

XXXIII.

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

XXXIV.

Then of the Thee in Me who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without—"The Me within Thee blind!"

XXXV.

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—"While you live,
Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return."

XXXVI.

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kiss'd,
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

XXXVII.

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!" [14]

XXXVIII.

And has not such a Story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations roll'd
Of such a clod of saturated Earth
Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

XXXIX.

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw [15]
For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

XL.

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

XLI.

Perplext no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

XLII.

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
Think then you are To-day what Yesterday
You were—To-morrow you shall not be less.

XLIII.

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.[16]

XLIV.

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Were't not a Shame—were't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

XLV.

'T is but a Tent where takes his one-day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death addrest;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

XLVI.

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Sákí from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

XLVII.

When you and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

XLVIII.

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of Being from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd
The Nothing it set out from—Oh, make haste!

XLIX.

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About the secret—quick about it, Friend!
A Hair perhaps divides the False and True—
And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

L.

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to The Master, too;

LI.

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi;[17] and
They change and perish all—but He remains;

LII.

A moment guess'd—then back behind the Fold
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He does Himself contrive, enact, behold.

LIII.

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
You gaze To-day, while You are You—how then
To-morrow, You when shall be You no more?

LIV.

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

LV.

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

LVI.

For "Is" and "Is-not" though with Rule and Line,[18]
And "Up-and-down" by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

LVII.

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay.
'T was only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

LVIII.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 't was—the Grape!

LIX.

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:[19]
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

LX.

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde[20]
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

LXI.

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

LXII.

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into Dust!

LXIII.

O threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain,—*This* Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

LXIV.

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

LXV.

The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their comrades, and to Sleep return'd.

LXVI.

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell."

LXVII.

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.

LXVIII.

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with this Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;[21]

LXIX.

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

LXX.

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—he knows—He knows![22]

LXXI.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

LXXII.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for It
As impotently rolls as you or I.

LXXIII.

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LXXIV.

Yesterday *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
To-morrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

LXXV.

I tell you this—When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n Parwín and Mushtarí they flung,[23]
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

LXXVI.

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LXXVII.

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LXXVIII.

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

LXXIX.

What, from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allay'd—
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

LXXX.

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

LXXXI.

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

* * * *

LXXXII.

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

LXXXIII.

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and some
Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

LXXXIV.

Said one among them—"Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure moulded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

LXXXV.

Then said a Second—"Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy:
And He that with his hand the Vessel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

LXXXVI.

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

LXXXVII.

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot—
I think a Súfi pipkin—waxing hot—
"All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me, then,
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?" [24]

LXXXVIII.

"Why," said another, "Some there are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marr'd in making—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 't will all be well."

LXXXIX.

"Well," murmur'd one, "Let whoso make or buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by."

XC.

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little Moon look'd in that all were seeking: [25]
And then they jogg'd each other, "Brother! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!"

* * * *

XCI.

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

XCII.

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

XCIII.

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in Men's eyes much wrong:
Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

XCIV.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

XCV.

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

XCVI.

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows.

XCVII.

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, reveal'd,
To which the fainting Traveller might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

XCVIII.

Would but some wingéd Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

XCIX.

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

* * * *

C.

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden—and for *one* in vain.

CI.

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!

TAMÁM.

RUBÁIYÁT

OF

OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR

FIRST EDITION.

I.

WAKE! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:
And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultán's Turret in a Noose of Light.

II.

Dreaming, when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky,
I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,
"Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
"Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."

III.

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the Door!
"You know how little while we have to stay,
"And, once departed, may return no more."

IV.

Now, the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the White Hand of Moses on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

V.

Iram indeed is gone with all its Rose,
And Jamshýd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still the Vine her ancient Ruby yields,
And still a Garden by the Water blows.

VI.

And David's Lips are lock't; but in divine
High piping Péhlevi, with "Wine! Wine! Wine!
"*Red* Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That yellow Cheek of her's to 'incarnadine.

VII.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII.

And look—a thousand Blossoms with the Day
Woke—and a thousand scatter'd into Clay:
And this first Summer Month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.

IX.

But come with old Khayyám, and leave the Lot
Of Kaikobád and Kaikhosrú forgot:
Let Rustum lay about him as he will,
Or Hátim Tai cry Supper—heed them not.

X.

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán scarce is known,
And pity Sultán Mahmúd on his Throne.

XI.

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

XII.

"How sweet is mortal Sovranty!"—think some:
Others—"How blest the Paradise to come!"
Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a *distant* Drum!

XIII.

Look to the Rose that blows about us—"Lo,
"Laughing," she says, "into the World I blow:
"At once the silken Tassel of my Purse
"Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

XIV.

The Worldly Hope men set their hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone.

XV.

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI.

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

XVII.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

XVIII.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

XIX.

And this delightful Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XX.

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears—
To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

XXI.

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best
That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to Rest.

XXII.

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

XXIII.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

XXIV.

Alike for those who for *To-day* prepare,
And those that after a *To-morrow* stare,
A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness cries
"Fool! your Reward is neither Here nor There!"

XXV.

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

XXVI.

Oh, come with old Khayyám, and leave the Wise
To talk; one thing is certain, that Life flies;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

XXVII.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

XXVIII.

With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand labour'd it to grow:
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

XXIX.

Into this Universe, and *why* not knowing,
Nor *whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX.

What, without asking, hither, hurried *whence*?
And, without asking, *whither* hurried hence!
Another and another Cup to drown
The Memory of this Impertinence!

XXXI.

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many Knots unravel'd by the Road;
But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.

XXXII.

There was a Door to which I found no Key:
There was a Veil past which I could not see:
Some little Talk awhile of Me and Thee
There seemed—and then no more of Thee and Me.

XXXIII.

Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,
Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to guide
"Her Little Children stumbling in the Dark?"
And—"A blind Understanding!" Heav'n replied.

XXXIV.

Then to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn
My Lip the secret Well of Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmured—"While you live
"Drink!—for once dead you never shall return."

XXXV.

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And merry-make; and the cold Lip I kiss'd
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

XXXVI.

For in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,
I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

XXXVII.

Ah, fill the Cup:—what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
Unborn To-morrow and dead Yesterday,
Why fret about them if To-day be sweet!

[From Preface.

Oh, if my soul can fling his Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heav'n ride,
Is 't not a Shame, is 't not a Shame for Him
So long in this Clay Suburb to abide?

Or is *that* but a Tent, where rests anon
A Sultán to his Kingdom passing on,
And which the swarthy Chamberlain shall strike
Then when the Sultán rises to be gone?]

XXXVIII.

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—
The Stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!

XXXIX.

How long, how long, in infinite Pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute?
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape,
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

XL.

You know, my Friends, how long since in my House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse

XLI.

For "Is" and "Is-not" though *with* Rule and Line,
And "Up-and-down" *without*, I could define,
I yet in all I only cared to know,
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

XLII.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 't was—the Grape!

XLIII.

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The subtle Alchemist that in a Trice
Life's leaden Metal into Gold transmute.

XLIV.

The mighty Mahmúd, the victorious Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters and slays with his enchanted Sword

XLV.

But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be:
And in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,
Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.

XLVI.

For in and out, above, about, below,
'T is nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun,
Round which we Phantom Figures come and go.

XLVII.

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in—Yes—
Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what
Thou shalt be—Nothing—Thou shalt not be less.

XLVIII.

While the Rose blows along the River Brink,
With old Khayyám the Ruby Vintage drink:
And when the Angel with his darker Draught
Draws up to Thee—take that, and do not shrink.

XLIX.

'T is all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:
Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

L.

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left, as strikes the Player, goes;
And He that toss'd Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*He* knows—*He* knows!

LI.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

LII.

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop't we live and die,
Lift not thy hands to *It* for help—for It
Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

LIII.

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man's knead,
And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
Yea, the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LIV.

I tell Thee this—When, starting from the Goal,
Over the shoulders of the flaming Foal
Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtarí they flung,
In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul

LV.

The Vine had struck a Fibre; which about
If clings my Being—let the Súfi flout;
Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LVI.

And this I know: whether the one True Light,
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Glimpse of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LVII.

Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

LVIII.

Oh, Thou, who man of baser Earth didst make
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

* * * *

KÚZA-NÁMA.

LIX.

Listen again. One Evening at the Close
Of Ramazán, ere the better Moon arose,
In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone
With the clay Population round in Rows.

LX.

And, strange to tell, among that Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not:
And suddenly one more impatient cried—
"Who *is* the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

LXI.

Then said another—"Surely not in vain
"My Substance from the common Earth was ta'en,
"That He who subtly wrought me into Shape
"Should stamp me back to common Earth again."

LXII.

Another said—"Why, ne'er a peevish Boy,
"Would break the Bowl from which he drank in Joy;
"Shall He that *made* the Vessel in pure Love
"And Fansy, in an after Rage destroy!"

LXIII.

None answer'd this; but after Silence spake
A Vessel of a more ungainly Make:
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
"What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

LXIV.

Said one—"Folks of a surly Tapster tell,
"And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
"They talk of some strict Testing of us—Pish!
"He's a Good Fellow, and 't will all be well."

LXV.

Then said another with a long-drawn Sigh,
"My Clay with long oblivion is gone dry:
"But, fill me with the old familiar Juice,
"Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!"

LXVI.

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
One spied the little Crescent all were seeking:
And then they Jogg'd each other, "Brother! Brother!
"Hark to the Porter's Shoulder-knot a-creaking!"

* * * *

LXVII.

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash my Body whence the Life has died,
And in the Windingsheet of Vine-leaf wrapt,
So bury me by some sweet Garden-side.

LXVIII.

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a Snare
Of Perfume shall fling up into the Air,
As not a True Believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

LXIX.

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my Credit in Men's Eye much wrong:
Have drown'd my Honour in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

LXX.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

LXXI.

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—well,
I often wonder what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the Goods they sell.

LXXII.

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

LXXIII.

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

LXXIV.

Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again:
How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same Garden after me—in vain!

LXXV.

And when Thyself with shining Foot shalt pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in thy joyous errand reach the Spot
Where I made one—turn down an empty Glass!

TAMÁM SHUD.

NOTES

NOTES.

[The references are, except in the first note only, to the Stanzas of the Fourth Edition.]

(Stanza First, First Edition.) Flinging a Stone into the Cup was the signal for "To Horse!" in the desert.

(II) [1]The "*False Dawn*"; *Subhi Kazib*, a transient Light on the Horizon about an hour before the *Subhi sadik*, or True Dawn; a well-known Phenomenon in the East.

(IV) [2]New Year. Beginning with the Vernal Equinox, it must be remembered; and (howsoever the old Solar Year is practically superseded by the clumsy *Lunar* year that dates from the Mohammedan Hijra) still commemorated by a Festival that is said to have been appointed by the very Jamshyd whom Omar so often talks of, and whose yearly Calendar he helped to rectify.

"The sudden approach and rapid advance of the Spring," says Mr. Binning, "are very striking. Before the Snow is well off the Ground, the Trees burst into Blossom, and the Flowers start from the Soil. At *Naw Rooz* (*their* New Year's Day) the Snow was lying in patches on the Hills and in the shaded Vallies, while the Fruit-trees in the Garden were budding beautifully,

and green Plants and Flowers springing upon the Plains on every side—

> 'And on old Hyems' Chin and icy Crown
> An odorous Chaplet of sweet Summer buds
> Is, as in mockery, set—

Among the Plants newly appear'd I recognized some Acquaintances I had not seen for many a Year: among these, two varieties of the Thistle; a coarse species of the Daisy, like the Horse-gowan; red and white Clover; the Dock; the blue Corn-flower; and that vulgar Herb the Dandelion rearing its yellow crest on the Banks of the Watercourses." The Nightingale was not yet heard, for the Rose was not yet blown; but an almost identical Blackbird and Woodpecker helped to make up something of a North-country Spring.

(IV) [3] Exodus iv. 6; where Moses draws forth his Hand—not, according to the Persians, "*leprous as Snow,*"—but *white*, as our May-blossom in Spring perhaps. According to them also the Healing Power of Jesus resided in his Breath.

(V) [4] Iram, planted by King Shaddád, and now sunk somewhere in the Sands of Arabia. Jamshyd's Seven-ring'd Cup was typical of the 7 Heavens, 7 Planets, 7 Seas, &c., and was a *Divining Cup*.

(VI) [5] *Pehlevi*, the old Heroic *Sanskrit* of Persia. Háfiz also speaks of the Nightingale's *Pehlevi*, which did not change with the People's.

[6] I am not sure if this refers to the Red Rose looking sickly, or the Yellow Rose that ought to be Red; Red, White, and Yellow Roses all common in Persia. I think Southey, in his Common-Place Book, quotes from some Spanish author about the Rose being White till 10 o'clock; "Rosa Perfecta" at 2; and "perfecta incarnada" at 5.

(X) [7] Rustum, the "Hercules" of Persia, and Zál his Father, whose exploits are among the most celebrated in the Sháh-náma. Hátim Tai, a well-known Type of Oriental Generosity.

(XIII) [8] A Drum—beaten outside a Palace.

(XIV) [9] That is, the Rose's Golden Centre.

(XVIII) [10] Persepolis: call'd also *Takht'i Jamshyd* —The Throne of Jamshyd, *"King Splendid,"* of the mythical *Peeshdadian* Dynasty, and supposed (according to the Sháh-náma) to have been founded and built by him. Others refer it to the Work of the Genie King, Ján Ibn Ján—who also built the Pyramids—before the time of Adam.

Bahrám Gúr—*Bahram of the Wild Ass*—a Sassanian Sovereign—had also his Seven Castles (like the King of Bohemia!) each of a different Colour: each with a Royal Mistress within; each of whom tells him a Story, as told in one of the most famous Poems of Persia, written by Amir Khusraw: all these Sevens also figuring (according to Eastern Mysticism) the

Seven Heavens; and perhaps the Book itself that Eighth, into which the mystical Seven transcend, and within which they revolve. The Ruins of Three of these Towers are yet shown by the Peasantry; as also the Swamp in which Bahrâm sunk, like the Master of Ravenswood, while pursuing his *Gur*.

> The Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw,
> And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew—
> I saw the solitary Ringdove there,
> And "Coo, coo, coo," she cried; and "Coo, coo, coo."

This Quatrain Mr. Binning found, among several of Háfiz and others, inscribed by some stray hand among the ruins of Persepolis. The Ringdove's ancient *Pehlevi Coo, Coo, Coo,* signifies also in Persian *"Where? Where? Where?"* In Attár's "Bird-parliament" she is reproved by the Leader of the Birds for sitting still, and for ever harping on that one note of lamentation for her lost Yúsuf.

Apropos of Omar's Red Roses in Stanza xix., I am reminded of an old English Superstition, that our Anemone Pulsatilla, or purple "Pasque Flower," (which grows plentifully about the Fleam Dyke, near Cambridge), grows only where Danish blood has been spilt.

(XXI) [11] A thousand years to each Planet.

(XXXI) [12] Saturn, Lord of the Seventh Heaven.

(XXXII) [13] Me-and-Thee: some dividual Existence or Personality distinct from the Whole.

(XXXVII) [14] One of the Persian Poets—Attár, I think—has a pretty story about this. A thirsty Traveller dips his hand into a Spring of Water to drink from. By and by comes another who draws up and drinks from an earthen Bowl, and then departs, leaving his Bowl behind him. The first Traveller takes it up for another draught; but is surprised to find that the same Water which had tasted sweet from his own hand tastes bitter from the earthen Bowl. But a Voice—from Heaven, I think—tells him the Clay from which the Bowl is made was once *Man;* and, into whatever shape renew'd, can never lose the bitter flavour of Mortality.

(XXXIX) [15] The custom of throwing a little Wine on the ground before drinking still continues in Persia, and perhaps generally in the East. Monsieur Nicolas considers it "un signe de libéralité, et en même temps un avertissement que le buveur doit vider sa coupe jusqu'a la dernière goutte." Is it not more likely an ancient Superstition; a Libation to propitiate Earth, or make her an Accomplice in the illicit Revel? Or. perhaps to divert the Jealous Eye by some sacrifice of superfluity, as with the Ancients of the West? With Omar we see something more is signified; the precious Liquor is not lost, but sinks into the ground to refresh the dust of some poor Wine-worshipper foregone.

Thus Háfiz, copying Omar in so many ways: "When thou drinkest Wine pour a draught on the

ground. Wherefore fear the Sin which brings to another Gain?"

(XLIII) [16] According to one beautiful Oriental Legend, Azräel accomplishes his mission by holding to the nostril an Apple from the Tree of Life.

This, and the two following Stanzas would have been withdrawn, as somewhat *de trop*, from the Text but for advice which I least like to disregard.

(LI) [17] From Máh to Máhi; from Fish to Moon

(LVI) [18] A Jest, of course, at his Studies. A curious mathematical Quatrain of Omar's has been pointed out to me; the more curious because almost exactly parallel'd by some Verses of Doctor Donne's, that are quoted in Izaak Walton's Lives! Here is Omar: "You and I are the image of a pair of compasses; though we have two heads (sc. our *feet*) we have one body; when we have fixed the centre for our circle, we bring our heads (sc. feet) together at the end." Dr. Donne:

If we be two, we two are so
As stiff twin-compasses are two;
Thy Soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but does if the other do.

And though thine in the centre sit,
Yet when my other far does roam,
Thine leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as mine comes home.

Such thou must be to me, who must
Like the other foot obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And me to end where I begun.

(LIX) [19] The Seventy-two Religions supposed to divide the World, *including* Islamism, as some think: but others not.

(LX) [20] Alluding to Sultán Mahmúd's Conquest of India and its dark people.

(LXVIII) [21] *Fanusí khíyal,* a magic-lanthorn still used in India; the cylindrical Interior being painted with various Figures, and so lightly poised and ventilated as to revolve round the lighted Candle within.

(LXX) [22] A very mysterious Line in the Original.

O dánad O dánad O dánad O——

breaking off something like our Wood-pigeon's Note, which she is said to take up just where she left off.

(LXXV) [23] Parwín and Mushtarí—The Pleiads and Jupiter.

(LXXXVII) [24] This relation of Pot and Potter to Man and his Maker figures far and wide in the Literature of the World, from the time of the Hebrew Prophets to the present; when it may finally take the name of "Pottheism," by which Mr. Carlyle ridiculed Sterling's "Pantheism." *My* Sheikh, whose knowledge flows in from all quarters, writes to me—

"Apropos of old Omar's Pots, did I ever tell you the sentence I found in 'Bishop Pearson on the Creed'?" "Thus are we wholly at the disposal of His will, and our present and future condition, framed and ordered by His free, but wise and just, decrees. "*Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor?*" (Rom. ix. 21.) And can that earth-artificer have a freer power over his *brother potsherd* (both being made of the same metal), than God hath over him, who, by the strange fecundity of His omnipotent power, first made the clay out of nothing, and then him out of that?"

And again—from a very different quarter—"I had to refer the other day to Aristophanes, and came by chance on a curious Speaking-pot story in the Vespæ, which I had quite forgotten.

Φιλοκλεων. Ἄκουε, μὴ φεῦγ'· ἐν Συβάρει γυνή ποτε κατέαξ' ἐχῖνον. 1.1435

Κατηγορος. Ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι.

Φι. Οὐχῖνος οὖν ἔχων τιὺ ἐπεμαρτύρατο·
Εἶθ' ἡ Συβαρῖτις εἶπεν, εἰ ναὶ τὰν κόραν
τὴν μαρτυρίαν ταὔτην ἐάσας, ἐν τάχει
ἐπίδεομον ἐπρίω, νοῦν ἂν εἶχες πλείονα.

"The Pot calls a bystander to be a witness to his bad treatment. The woman says, 'If, by Proserpine, instead of all this 'testifying,' (comp. Cuddie and his mother in 'Old Mortality') you would buy yourself a

trivet, it would show more sense in you!' The Scholiast explains *echinus* as ἄγγος τι ἐκ κεράμου."

One more illustration for the oddity's sake from the "Autobiography of a Cornish Rector," by the late James Hamley Tregenna. 1871.

"There was one odd Fellow in our Company—he was so like a Figure in the 'Pilgrim's Progress' that Richard always called him the 'Allegory,' with a long white beard—a rare Appendage in those days—and a Face the colour of which seemed to have been baked in, like the Faces one used to see on Earthenware Jugs. In our Country-dialect Earthenware is called *'Clome'*; so the Boys of the Village used to shout out after him—'Go back to the Potter, Old Clomeface, and get baked over again.' For the 'Allegory,' though shrewd enough in most things, had the reputation of being *'saift-baked,'* i. e., of weak intellect."

(XC) [25] At the close of the Fasting Month, Ramazán (which makes the Mussulman unhealthy and unamiable), the first Glimpse of the New Moon (who rules their division of the Year), is looked for with the utmost Anxiety, and hailed with Acclamation. Then it is that the Porter's Knot may be heard—toward the *Cellar*. Omar has elsewhere a pretty Quatrain about this same Moon—

> "Be of Good Cheer—the sullen Month will die,
> And a young Moon requite us by and by:
> Look how the Old one meagre, bent, and wan
> With Age and Fast, is fainting from the Sky!"

NOTES BY THE EDITOR.

Giving References from Fitzgerald's Rubáiyyát to the Originals as published by Nicolas, Paris, 1867, and Mr. Whinfield's English Version Printed in 1882; with Occasional Literal Renderings in the Form and Metre of the Originals.

The Roman numerals on the left refer to quatrains of the Rubáiyyát as published in the Fourth edition. The Arabic figures in the first column on the right refer to the Rubáiyyát as numbered in the Paris edition. The Arabic figures of the last column refer to Whinfield's translation.

(F.) (N.) (W.)

I. This *ruba'iy* is not, in either of its forms, found in Nicolas or in Whinfield.

II. The first in the Persian text of Nicolas . 1 Absent

The following is a nearly exact rendering, both of the sense and the metre—

Out from our inn, one morn, a voice came roaring—"Up!
Sots, scamps, and madmen! quit your heavy snoring! Up!
Come pour we out a measure full of wine, and drink!
Ere yet the measure's brimmed for us they're pouring up!"

I. and II. can be compared with N. 255, W. 158; which may be rendered thus—

(F.) (N.) (W.)

Lo! the dawn breaks, and the curtain of night is torn,
Up! swallow thy morning cup—Why seem to mourn?
Drink wine, my heart! for the dawns will come and come
Still facing to us when our faces to earthward turn!

III. Not in the Persian, nor in Whinfield.

IV. 186 109

"The thoughtful soul to solitude retires"
is the only interpolation.

V. Not in the Persian, nor in Whinfield.

VI. Partly original; partly agreeing with . 153 94

VII. Not found in the Persian, nor in Whinfield.

VIII. 105 73

Since, bitter or sweet, Life ends so soon, why care, Love?
When the soul from the lip takes flight, what matters it where, Love?
Quaff wine!—yon Moon that waxes and wanes unceasing,
When you and I are gone, will still be there, Love!

IX. Seems compounded of two Persian stanzas 455 370 250

370 of the original may be rendered thus—

See how the zephyr tears the scarf of the rose away;
The rose's beauty charms the bulbul's woes away!
Go, sit in the shade of the rose, for every rose
That springs from the earth, again to earth soon goes away!

(F.)		(N.)	(W.)
X.	Is a verbal echo of the Persian stanza, but quite different in sense	416	235

The original is—

So long as thy frame of flesh and of bone shall be,
Stir not one step outside Fate's hostelry;—
Bow to no foe—e'en Rustum or Zál—thy neck,
Take from no friend a gift, though Hátim he!

XI. XII.	Compounded of three stanzas . .	82	
		413	234
		448	247

82 in the original is—

In the Springtime, biding with one who is houri-fair,
And a flask of wine, if 't is to be had—somewhere
On the tillage's grassy skirt—Alack! though most
May think it a sin, I feel that my heaven is there?

413 in the original—

A flask of red wine, and a volume of song, together—
Half a loaf,—just enough the ravage of Want to tether:
Such is my wish—then, thou in the waste with me—
Oh! sweeter were this than a monarch's crown and feather!

(A parallel is also found in No. 146 of the Persian, which runs thus—

He who doth here below but half a loaf possess,
Who for his own can claim some sheltering nook's recess,
He who to none is either lord or thrall—
Go! tell him he enjoys the world's full happiness!)

(F.) (N.) (W.)

XIII. Compounded of two stanzas, the first of which is not in the printed text { 61 / 92 43

The Persian of N. 92, may be rendered thus—

I know not if He who kneaded my clay to man
Belong to the host of Heaven or the Hellish clan;—
A life mid the meadows, with Woman, and Music, and Wine,
Heaven's *cash* is to me;—let Heaven's *credit* thy fancy trepan!

XIV. Not found in the Persian of Nicolas . 189

XV. 156 95

This is very beautiful in Fitzgerald. The exact rendering of the Persian is—

Darling, ere griefs our nightly couch enfold again,
Bid wine be brought, red sparkling as of old, again!
—And *thou*, weak fool! think not that thou art gold:
When buried, none will dig *thee* up from the mould again!

XVI. Not found in the Persian or in Whinfield.

XVII. 67

This old inn call'd the world, that man shelters his head in,
(Pied curtains of Dawn and of Dusk o'er it spreading;)
'Tis the banqueting-hall many Jamshids have quitted,
The couch many Bahrâms have found their last bed in!

XVIII. 69 35

Here, where Bahrâm oft filled his Chalice high, elate,
Now, beasts of prey the ruined palace violate;—
Like the wild ass he lassoed, the great Hunter
Lies in the noose of Huntsman Death, annihilate.

(F.) (N.) (W.)

XIX. Not in Nicolas' Persian text 58

XX. 59 31

The verdure sweet yon rivulet's bank arraying there,
" 'Tis the down on an angel's lip," in homely saying, there—
O tread not thereon disdainfully!—it springeth
From the dust of some tulip-cheek that lies decaying there!

XXI. 269 167

Let not the morrow make thee, friend, down-hearted!
Draw profit of the day yet undeparted:
We'll join, when we to-morrow leave this mansion,
The band seven thousand years ago that started!

XXII. A very beautiful stanza which I do not find in the Persian

XXIII. 348 205

The wheel of Heaven thy death and mine is bringing, friend!
Over our lives the cloud of doom 't is flinging, friend!
Come, sit upon this turf, for little time is left
Ere fresher turf shall from our dust be springing, friend!

XXIV. Complementary to the sense of XXIII, with an addition not in the Persian.

XXV. 337 198

Myriad minds at work, of sects and creeds to learn,
The Doubtful from the Sure all puzzled to discern:
Suddenly from the Dark the crier raised a cry—
"Not *this*, not *that*, ye fools! the path that ye must turn!"

(F.) (N.) (W.)

How delicately and skilfully Fitzgerald turns the Persian expression literally into a common English phrase, "neither here nor there," to which he lends new force and effect! Instead of "from the dark, the Crier," Whinfield has "from behind the veil a Voice," while Fitzgerald expresses it in a fine paraphrase, "A Muezzin from the tower of Darkness."

XXVI. Evidently from a Persian source which I cannot identify. It resembles N. 120, W. 82, which correspond to the following—

The learned, the cream of mankind, who have driven
Intellect's chariot over the heights of heaven—
Void and o'erturned, like that blue sky they trace,
Are dazed, when they to measure Thee have striven!

XXVII. 225 143

Forth, like a hawk, from Mystery's world I fly,
Seeking escape to win from the Low to the High:
But finding none that more of it knows than I,
Out through the door I go that I entered by!

XXVIII. Not in Nicolas 185

XXIX. } Paraphrased from the original (not
XXX. } in Nicolas) of 64

(F.) (N.) (W.)

There is a hint of it in N. 42 and in W. 12, which corresponds to N. 22. This last may be rendered—

This life is but three days' space, and it speeds apace,
Like wind that sweeps away o'er the desert's face:
So long as it lasts, two days ne'er trouble my mind,
—The day undawned, and the day that has run its race.

XXXI. } Neither in Nicolas . . . . . { 161
XXXII. } { 203

XXXIII. A fine stanza; not in N. or in W.

XXXIV. Not found in N. or W.

XXXV. Not in the Persian text of Nicolas. 149

A similar thought is contained in N. 389, W. 223—

Sprung from the Four, and the Seven! I see that never
The Four and the Seven respond to thy brain's endeavour—
Drink wine! for I tell thee, four times o'er and more,
Return there is none!—Once gone, thou art gone for ever!

(The four elements and the seven heavens from which man derives his essence.)

XXXVI. Perhaps suggested by N. 28, W. 17.

XXXVII. 211 137

XXXVIII. Perhaps suggested by N. 119.

(F.)		(N.)	(W.)
XXXIX.		188	110
XL.		40	
XLI.		294 359	
XLII.	Partly altered from	49	28
XLIII.	Not in Nicolas		139
XLIV.	Not in Nicolas		218
XLV.		80	37

A very fine and sufficiently close rendering, but the final "prepares it for another guest" contains an idea which confuses the relations between the body and the soul. This is closer—

Thy body's a tent, where the Soul, like a King in quest
Of the goal of Nought, is a momentary guest;—
He arises; Death's *farrash* uproots the tent,
And the King moves on to another stage to rest.

XLVI.		137 319	90 190
XLVII.	Not found in the original		
XLVIII.	Ditto. Perhaps suggested by N. 80 and N. 214. The latter (214) may be rendered—		

(F.) (N.) (W.)

Up! smooth-faced boy, the daybreak shines for thee:
Brimm'd with red wine let the crystal goblet be!
This hour is lent thee in the House of Dust:—
Another thou may'st seek, but ne'er shalt see!

XLIX., L., LI. Not found. These three and the preceding one are probably founded on N. 365 and N. 214 blended.

LII. 443 244

LIII. 49 28

LIV. Not found.

LV. 181 106

A double-sized beaker to measure my wine I'll take;
Two doses to match my settled design I'll take;
With the first I'll divorce me from Faith and from Reason quite,
With the next, a new bride in the Child of the Vine I'll take!

This is a conceit derived from the Mohammedan law of divorce. Similar imagery is used in N. 259.

LVI. Not found. Perhaps suggested from the same source as XXXV.

LVII. Not found. Derived from N.22, which is noticed under XXIX-XXX.

(F.) (N.) (W.)

LVIII. 329

A tolerably close paraphrase of the Persian *words*, but conveying a totally different sense.

LIX. 179 105

Only the last line differs to any considerable degree, and Fitzgerald has in it replaced the original with a superior idea.

LX. } Not found.
LXI. }

LXII. Suggested by the conceits of *cash and credit* (*i. e.*, enjoyment of to-day, put in opposition to the ascetic holiness which waits for joy in the next world), which recur frequently in the Persian.

LXIII. Not found.

LXIV. 217 141

LXV. 464 116

Is not so good as the original, which is the last stanza of the Persian text as given by Nicolas.

(F.) (N.) (W.)

Those who were paragons of Worth and Ken,
Whose greatness torchlike lights their fellow men,
Out of this night profound no path have traced for us;—
They've babbled dreams, then fall'n to sleep again!

LXVI. Not found.

LXVII. Altered from 90 41

LXVIII. Improved from the Persian 267 165

This vault of Heaven at which we gaze astounded,
May by a painted lantern be expounded:
The light's the Sun, the lantern is the World,
And We the figures whirling dazed around it!

LXIX. 231 148

But puppets are we in Fate's puppet-show—
No figure of speech is this, but in truth 't is so!
On the draughtboard of Life we are shuffled to and fro,
Then one by one to the box of Nothing go!

LXX. Not in Nicolas 104

LXXI. 216 140

Since life has, love! no true reality,
Why let its coil of cares a trouble be?
Yield thee to Fate, whatever of pain it bring:
The Pen will never unwrite its writ for thee!

LXXII. 95 45

LXXIII. } Derived from . . . . . { 216 140
LXXIV. } { 85 40
LXXV. } { 110 77

(F.)		(N.)	(W.)
LXXVI.	Not found.		
LXXVII.	Altered considerably from . . .	222	142

In the tavern, better with Thee my soul I share
Than in the mosque, without Thee, uttering prayer—
O Thou, the First and Last of all that is!
Or doom Thou me to burn, or choose to spare.

LXXVIII. LXXIX LXXX.	. . . . .	99 190 268 390	46 111

N. 99 is as follows—

When the Supreme my body made of clay,
He well foreknew the part that I should play:
Not without his ordainment have I sinned!
Why would He then I burn at Judgment-day?

N. 380 contains a similar idea, and has perhaps furnished suggestion for LXXIX—

The wayward caprices my life that have tinted
All spring from the mould on my Being imprinted;
Nought else and nought better my nature could be—
I am as I came from the crucible minted!

LXXXI. Partly from the same sources as LXXVIII–LXXX, and partly from 375

But the original does not contain the idea of "Man's forgiveness give—and take!"

(F.) (N.) (W.)

N. 375 may be rendered thus—

Woe! that life's work should be so vain and hollow:
Sin in each breath and in the food we swallow!
Black is my face that what was Bid, undone is:
—If done the Unbidden, ah! what then must follow?

LXXXII. LXXXIII. LXXXVII. } Contain in greater diffuseness the exact idea of 243 156

To a potter's shop yestreen, I did repair;
Two thousand dumb or chattering pots were there,
All turned to me, and asked with speech distinct:
"Who is 't that makes, that buys, that sells our ware?"

LXXXIV. LXXXV. } 38

LXXXVI. LXXXVIII. } Suggested by several of the rubáiyyát.

LXXXIX. . . . . { 290 185 / 115

When Fate at her foot, a broken wreck shall fling me,
And when Fate's hand, a poor plucked fowl shall wring me;
Beware, of my clay, aught else than a bowl to make,
That the scent of the wine new life in time may bring me!

XC. Not in the original.

XCI. 109 76

(F.) (N.) (W.)

Let wine, gay comrades, be the food I'm fed upon;—
These amber cheeks its ruby light be shed upon!
Wash me in 't, when I die;—and let the trees
Of my vineyard yield the bier that I lie dead upon!

XCII.
XCIII. } Not in the original.
XCIV.

XCV. 463 115

Since the Moon and the Star of Eve first shone on high,
Nought has been known with ruby wine could vie:
Strange, that the vintners should in traffic deal!
Better than what they sell, what could they buy?

XCVI. 128 86

Ah! that young Life should close its volume bright away!
Mirth's springtime green, that it should pass from sight away!
Ah! for the Bird of Joy whose name is Youth:
We know not when she came, nor when took flight away!

XCVII. Not found in the original.

XCVIII. } Suggested by N. 216, 340, 457;
XCIX. } W. 140, 200, 251.

N. 340 may be rendered thus—

If I like God o'er Heaven's high fate could reign,
I'd sweep away the present Heaven's domain,
And from its ruins such a new one build
That an honest heart its wish could aye attain!

(E.) (N.) (W.)

N. 457 is as follows—

I would God were this whole world's scheme renewing,
—And now! at once! that I might see it doing!
That either from His roll my name were cancelled,
Or luckier days for me from Heaven accruing!

C. . . . . { 8 2
94

8 is as follows—

Since none can be our surety for to-morrow,
Sweeten, my love, thy heart to-day from sorrow:
Drink wine, fair Moon, in wine-light, for the moon
Will come again, and miss us, many a morrow!

94.

The moon cleaves the skirt of the night—then, oh! drink Wine!
For never again will moment like this be thine.
Be gay! and remember that many and many a moon
On the surface of earth again and again will shine!

CI. 192 112

Appoint ye a tryst, happy comrades, anon!
And when—as your revel in gladness comes on—
The Saki takes goblet in hand, oh! remember,
And bless, while you drink, the poor fellow that's gone!

The following may be added, as characteristic of the spirit of Omar Khayyâm:

N. 2.

Thou! chosen one from earth's full muster-roll to me!
Dearer than my two eyes, than even my soul to me!
—Though nothing than life more precious we esteem,
Yet dearer art thou; my love, a hundred-fold to me!

N. 4.

Nothing but pain and wretchedness we earn in
This world that for a moment we sojourn in:
We go!—no problem solved alas! discerning;
Myriad regrets within our bosoms burning!

N. 5.

O master! grant us only this, we prithee:
Preach not! but *mutely* guide to bliss, we prithee!
"*We* walk not straight?"—Nay, it is *thou* who squintest!
Go, heal thy sight, and leave us in peace, we prithee!

N. 6.

Hither! come hither, love! my heart doth need thee!
Come, and expound a riddle I will read thee.
The earthen jar bring too,—and let us drink, love!
Ere, turned to clay, to earthenware they knead thee!

N. 7.

Wash me when dead in the juice of the vine, old friends!
Let your funeral service be drinking and wine, old friends!
And if you would meet me again when the Doomsday comes,
Search the dust of the tavern, and sift from it mine, old friends!

N. 13.

Howe'er with beauty's hue and bloom endow'd I be,
Of tulip-cheek and cypress-form though proud I be;
  Yet know I not why the Limner chose that, here, in this
Mint-house of clay, amid the painted crowd I be!

N. 57.

Unworthy of Hell, unfit for Heaven I be—
God knows what clay He used when He moulded me!
  Foul as a punk, ungodly as a monk,
No faith, no world, no hope of Heaven I see!

N. 88.

Wicked, men call me ever; yet blameless I!
Think how it is, ye Saints!—My life, ye cry,
  Breaks all Heaven's laws—Good lack! I have no sin,
That needs reproach, save wenching and drink—then, why?

N. 388.

O! Thou hast shattered to bits my jar of wine, my Lord!
Thou hast shut me out from the gladness that was mine, my Lord!
  Thou hast spilt and scattered my wine upon the clay—
O dust in my mouth! if the drunkness be not Thine, my Lord!

According to the testimony of an old MS., according to M. Nicolas, the third line of this stanza ought to run thus—

"*I* drink the wine; 't is Thou who feel'st its power—"

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